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SHABBAT

THE RAGPICKERS SABBATH

by Mendele Mocher Sforim

Six days in the week Shmulik the rag-picker lived like a dog. But on the eve of the Sabbath all was changed in his house. The walls were white-washed, the house was cleaned; a new cloth shines on the table, and the rich and yellow bread, a joy to the eyes, rests thereon. The candles burn in their copper candlesticks, burnished for the Sabbath; and a smell of good food goes out of the oven, where the dishes are covered. All week long the mother of the house has been black as coal; today her face is resplendent, a white kerchief is tied on her head, and a spirit of grace has breathed upon her. The little girls, with bare feet, have come back from the bath; their hair is coiled in tresses; they linger in the corners of the room; by their faces it may be seen that they are waiting, joyous hearted, for those whom they love.

"Gut Shabbos," says Shmulik, as he enters; and he looks with love on his wife and his children, and his face beams. "Gut Shabbos, says Moishele, his son, loudly, as he too enters hurriedly, like one who is full of good tidings, and eager to spread them. And to and fro in the house the father and the son go, singing, with pleasant voices, the Sholom Aleichem songs that greet the invisible angels that come into every Jewish house when the father returns from the house of prayer on the eve of the Sabbath.

The rag-picker is no longer a dog; today he has a new soul. It is the Shabbos, and Shmulik is the son of a king. He says the "Kiddush" over the wine, and he sits down at the table. His wife is on his right, and his children are around them. They dip their spoons into the dish to take a little soup, a piece of meat, a fragment of fish, of barley, or of the other good things that they know nothing of during the week. The children carry these dainties to their lips with their five fingers, so that they may lose nothing of them. They eat carefully, as attentive to their food as the squirrel at the top of a tree, when he crunches a nut between his teeth, and all his mind and body are concentrated on the act....

Now Shmulik clears his throat and begins to intone a song of the Sabbath. "Beautiful and holy is the Sabbath day." And his voice becomes stronger as he goes on to the "Ma Yafit," and sings of the weary who find rest, and of the wild river Sambatyon, which is tumultuous six days of the week, and on the seventh rests from its rage. "Sambatyon, Sambatyon, wild with haste every day." Sambatyon...is not Sambatyon Israel? All week long Israel runs from place to place. When the Sabbath day comes he pauses and rests; and on the eve of the Sabbath there is no more sadness and no more sighing.

What the Sabbath Has Meant to the Jew

By--Maurice Samuel

To the Jew the Sabbath became far more than the recurrent extrication of the soul from the degradations of workaday worldliness. It was also a release from the degradations he suffered at the hands of the outside world. For him the world faded away with the lighting of the candles on Friday evening, and he was confirmed in both his relationship to God and in his hope of that time when all days would be Sabbaths. It could be said of the Jew that he lived the first three days of the week in the memory of the past Sabbath, and the last three days in anticipation of the next. He understood as no one else, the frequency with which the desecration of the Sabbath is denounced by the Prophets as part of the falling away of the people from God's purposes; the Sabbath is stressed more insistently than any other sacred institution, and it occupies the central place among the rituals that are bound up with Jewish morality. A saying of Achad Ha'am's has become a Jewish folkword: "More than the Jewish people has done to keep the Sabbath alive, the Sabbath has done to keep it alive."

The Sabbath also stands apart in that it has the power to repress all fasts in the Jewish calendar save the Day of Atonement. The Black Fast of the Ninth of Ab for the Destructions may not be observed or remembered on the Sabbath. The private mourner, too, must forget his loss on that day; for it is a day of serenity and wholeness. A vast literature of legend and commentary has sprung up about its origin and efficacy. It was created before the physical universe; the stormy river Sambattyon rests on that day; the sinners in hell obtain a twenty-four hour reprieve; and on that day the poorest Jew is elevated to the rank of a king, his wife to that of a queen.

The oncoming of the Sabbath is attended by an uplifting of the heart, its departure by a gnawing melancholy. Farewell to the glimpse of paradise! Its hours are treasured for prayer, for sacred study, for purity of conversation and thought, for the complete deletion, of course, of worldly calculations (it is even forbidden to have money in one's pocket on the Sabbath!), for rest, for gratitude, and for the impotence of the outside world to inflict suffering. Thus it was; the exile itself was forgotten on the Sabbath.

This and more is the word Shabbos in Yiddish. How is it to be "translated"?

THE TWO MOTHERS

by Shalom Asch

To Yechiel it seemed as though he had two mothers. A weekday and a Sabbath mother. The weekday mother was the one with the shabby old wig, whose black satin band, showing at her brow, was turned green with the sun. His weekday mother stood in the market place; haggled with peasants, and screamed, scolded, lied... But in a few short hours on Friday evening, from the time when the men went to God's house until the moment when after the prayer in salutation of the Sabbath they returned again, in that brief span she was completely changed. No, she was not changed; she was transformed into another mother...

When Yechiel returned with his father from the synagoge, another mother rose to meet him - his Sabbath mother with a hood decked with feathers on her head and a gayly embroidered velvet jacket. Her Sabbath wig was like a crown above her festively gleaming brow. Infinite maternal loveliness shone from her face, from her eyes, from her darkly glowing skin. Her neck looked different. It was soft as down, supple and very very smooth, so that it was a pleasure to gaze at, and he felt a longing to bury his face in it. But the Sabbath shone, most gloriously of all, on his mother's high and noble brow, which gleamed like a sun.

Yet, everything else was altered too, the shelves, the table, the whole room. To Yechiel it was as if, while the men were away, some mysterious change had happened to his mother of which others knew nothing and were permitted to know nothing.

While she was reciting the prayer over the Sabbath Candles, a holy angel must have visited the house and cast the glory of God over her face, over the table and all the room.

Just as Yechiel had a weekday and a Sabbath mother, so he had a weekday and a Sabbath God too. In his imagination the Sabbath God had a feminine form which reminded him in some way of his ancetress Rachel... Thus, he learned to see his mother with different eyes, because she was connected with a divine beauty of the Sabbath. And now he found the explanation for which he hitherto had sought in vain. In reality his mother was a Sabbath mother. It was only during the worldly turmoil of the week, and because the Jewish people were in exile, that she had to endure being transformed into a weekday mother.

But, when the Messiah came, there would only be a Sabbath mother for ever and ever.

SABBATH IN ISRAEL

by Jacob Fichman

In Tel Aviv and in Haifa, in Jerusalem and Tiberias, in Rehoboth and in Tel Chai, wherever I have sojourned or dwelt for a time, I have felt the light of grace that enfolds the world on the Sabbath.

Tel Aviv is a secular city, an altogether modern city, but on Friday afternoon the Sabbath becomes mistress of every corner. The stream of life halts, peace descends on the noisy streets. Waggons are gone from the roads and the noise of automobiles is silenced. The streets seem new washed and widened. On the down-slope of Allenby Road near the seashore, the Square, which will soon be filled with Sabbath strollers, is emptied for a while, and gleams all white, as if floodlighted from some mysterious source. Pure sunset clouds, like transparent blue-embroidered Sabbath curtains hang over the sea. Like a thin partition they stretch from the sky down to the calm waters. The sea basks in its Sabbath rest. And whoever then sits by the sea, feels in the air, in the lovely quiet, in the murmuring of the waters, a tenderness of Sabbath. How sweet they are, the Sabbath eves, on the shores of my Homeland seas!

Greater still is the impression of the welcoming of the Sabbath in Old Jerusalem. Through narrow alleys, under dark strong arch-ways companies of Jews walk in a long procession to the Wailing Wall, there to meet the Sabbath. Tremblingly these Jews, solemn and new-clothed, walk towards the holy relic, fearfullest they lose a single drop of the great influence which they bear along with them as a gift of thanksgiving to the Queen. All the way from the Tower of David down to the bottom of the road, they stream in coloured garments, seeming like the delegates of a great embassy; and whoever sees them, may deem that they have just now come from a faraway land, and are marching to the Wall to meet G-d's Presence, in the form of Sabbath the Bride when the hour of the Sabbath welcome arrives, there is felt a kind of foretaste of the promised Redemption, even as with every outgoing of the Sabbath there is a feeling of the renewal of the enslavement of the gloom ahead.

Nowhere is the forefeeling of Redemotion stronger than in Safed, in Tiberias, in the entire landscape of Galilee, Sabbath in Galilee is overhung with a mystic sublimity, with longings for the Messiah. The hymn "Lechah Dodi" composed by the Safed poet Rabbi Shelomo Alkabetz, is not merely a song of Sabbath-welcome, but is also a messianic hymn, an announcement of Redemption. The students of Kabala saw in this hour of grace in which all hearts are purified and united in one feeling of joy and ex-ulation. Here is the great hour-the great opprotunity for self-redemption by the power of faith, which is poured on them out of the glory of Sabbath. If only Israel would know how to use this opportunity and not miss it! Only one who has breathed the pure air of Safed on Sabbath nights, one who has seen the Sabbath candles reflected tremblingly in the waters of Lake Kinnereth, may know all the charm of the Sabbath in Galilee. The blowing winds that bespeak the "Sabbath of Sabbaths," the "peace of peace." The stars, aglitter with Sabbath beams, proclaim: Redemption has come into the world!

ME AND MY GIRL FRIEND

by Osher Epstein

Shalom, surprise, and cha-cha-cha! It's me, Osher. Yeh, it's me. All by my li'l ol' lonesome self. I'm not kidding. I'm back in the flesh. Here, feel.

Sure, camp was fun and all that, but you didn't expect me to stay there all year, did you? Think I want to freeze or something? Besides, I wanted to come back. We have lots of things to do this year in that crazy, mixed-up, wonderful, exciting, gay, and enjoyable movement called Habonim. This year is Habonim's 25th anniversary. Do you think I want to miss any of it?

I want to tell you what happened at camp. I had a girl friend there. Aha, I can see all of you smirking. You know all about her, huh? "I know, her name is Adina and she has red hair and you like red hair..." Well, you're wrong.

Her name is Malka, and she's here in the city with me now. What a girl! She's tall, and quiet, she usually dresses in white, and she has a smile that is really catching, if you know what I mean. When she walks, it sounds like the faint rustle of leaves, and when she sits down next to me, I glow as bright as a Shabbat candle. She's a real queen, which, of course, is what the name Malka means.

But I can't tell you the color of her eyes or hair because--and now this gets sort of complicated--I've never seen her. Don't make a face! Did you ever see Spring? Did you ever argue with Winter? Did you ever walk with Twilight and Evening? Of course you did. I'm sure that you met all of them, even though you never really saw them. So the very same way, this summer, I met Shabbat HaMalka, the Sabbath Queen.

Sure, I've heard of her before. In my other years at camp, I knew all about Shabbat and Friday clean-up and sleeping late Saturday morning and the chicken dinner on Friday night. But I never really met Shabbat HaMalka, and if I did, I left her at camp when I came home in August.

This year, things were different. But they began the same. It was Friday afternoon and if you were at camp, you know what we were doing. Everyone was running around getting ready for Shabbat. One crew was washing the dining hall floor, another was preparing the decorations, another was cleaning the grounds, and there was a whole line of people waiting for the iron. Everyone was working hard for Shabbat--everyone, except me.

Me. I had found myself a shady spot in our pine forest so I could enjoy reading some I. L. Peretz stories I found in the library. I was lying down and having a fine time when suddenly, a voice said: "Shalom, Osher." No, It wasn't Shabbat HaMalka. It was Moshe, my madrich. "Shalom," I replied in a rather scared voice. "Nice forest you got here."

"Yep," said Moshe, "and it's also a pretty nice camp. Everyone else is busy cleaning up."

"Well," I said, "this book is pretty interesting and I felt it wouldn't make much difference if my six feet of kitchen floor weren't scrubbed."

"Oh," said Moshe, giving me a sly look, "is this the way you prepare for your best girl friend's visit?"

That started it, and next thing I knew, Moshe told me all about Shabbat HaMalka as the symbol of peace and beauty on the 7th day. He spoke of wanting to clean things up so that we could really be proud of ourselves and our camp when she came. He spoke of the pleasure of seeing her and how we look forward to having her in our company. But none of this stuff really went with me. "What's she like?" I asked. "How come I've never met her? How do you go about making her acquaintance?"

"She comes when you least expect it," said Moshe, "but some Friday at sunset, when you've done something to prepare for her coming, you'll feel it inside of you. And then, Osher, you'll meet Shabbat HaMalka. Now, if you want to stay and read the book, go ahead. If you want to miss something, that's O.K. with me."

So I stayed and I missed something. I know, because two weeks later--I learned.

It was also on a Friday afternoon, and this time, I wasn't a sluffer. I had helped clean up the camp, showered, dressed in Shabbat clothes, and now I was back in the pine forest. I was there to prepare for my part in the program before dinner, the Kabbalat Shabbat. I was to sing the verses to the old prayer, "L'cha dodi likrat kalah." For the benefit of those who don't go to Hebrew school (and why not?), the English is, "Come, my friend, to meet the Queen, Oh, welcome now the Sabbath dream."

So I was walking and singing and listening. It was a wonderful time. The day was losing some of its heat, the trees were bending to the breeze, and the sun was about to begin its last brilliant dash before setting. I began to get that fine feeling you have when you come to the end of a really well-done day. I sat down in my favorite spot in the pine forest and relaxed. It was a real comfort. The clouds, the sky, the trees, the crickets, and me--all seemed like a big happy family. We all seemed to belong to each other, if you know what I mean. I smiled again and began to hum to myself.

Then it happened. It started in my legs, bounced when it hit my heart, and spread over my whole body. It was a crazy feeling of feeling good. It was a numbness and a tingle, a tiredness and a glow. It was wonderful. Everything began to look a little different, much more special. It was as if the whole earth was dressed up in special clothing. Then I realized that something new was in the forest. It was Shabbat HaMalka.

Sure, I couldn't see her, but walking back to the camp, I knew she was there. She was standing with us as we had the Kabbala service, and she smiled when we sang the Shabbat songs. She walked with us back to the dining hall. Then, just before we went inside, I'm sure she jumped ahead so that she could spread her charm all around the room before we entered.

And what a meal we had that night. The chicken was nothing new, but the feeling was. We were all a group of friends taking out one day to look around and smile. We were all singing and dancing with the joy and love of being alive in a wonderful world. We were all welcoming the queen of the camp, Shabbat HaMalka.

So that's it. That's how I found her. From then on, there was no question of clean-up on Friday afternoon. You're not going to show a sloppy camp to such a wonderful person, are you? But the important thing was Friday night and Saturday. Those were really times to remember.

Oh yes, I found out why the food tastes so much better on Friday night. It's because of a spice Malka puts into it. It's called Shabbat.

THE SABBATH

from "The Pillar of Salt"
by Albert Memmi

At first, I wanted to write a whole book about the even tenor of happiness of my earliest years, but in spite of my nostalgia for this period, I have barely managed to scribble these few pages about it, as though I were trying to avoid its very memory. Still, I would like to add something now about our Friday nights and our Saturday mornings, so wonderfully joyful and peacefully holy.

Friday was always born in an excited dawn, and it blossomed majestically into a triumphant Sabbath that made us stiff and solemn in our holiday attire, all lit up by the solemn candles. Kalla and I had no new duties, but we enjoyed the happy excitement of the household. Mother and Joulie, our neighbor, assisted by the latter's daughter Touira, hurried all day at their chores, with twice as many fires in their earthenware hearths, for they had to set out, all over the rooms, the meals for two whole days. They only just managed to get everything done by the time the first star appeared to announce the Sabbath. At five o'clock, the darkness that was beginning in our room discovered a new order: the laden table spread with an embroidered white cloth, the chest of drawers bearing a bowl of yellow narcissus, the bed and the sofa covered with white sheets. The great brass candlestick and two Phoenician lamps replaced the oil lamp. The olive oil sizzled as it burned, with an occasional sputter, and cast trembling shadows that were soft and unfamiliar on our walls. For the Sabbath, even the light seemed unusual. Scrubbed in warm water, combed and dressed in our best, we waited for Father to come home earlier than usual. But on his way he had stopped at the barber's so that when he appeared he was well shaven and combed, already Sabbatical in spite of his working clothes. He dropped his heavy keys on the marble top of our chest of drawers and drew oranges, sweet lemons, or dates and nuts from the depths of his coat pockets, or else a big bag of roasted chick-peas and a smaller one of pistachio nuts, all of which he handed to Mother.

One after another, our Friday evening friends then began to arrive: Didakh the cobbler, Hmainou the watchmaker, sometimes Joule, the landlady's son who felt happier with us than with his own mother. My father, with everything about him clean, his hair carefully brushed flat, and a sprig of jasmine tucked over his ear, was happy and relaxed, seated Turkish style on the divan as on a throne. The men would then drink their little glasses of araki as they ate force-meat balls, chick-peas, and strongly seasoned pickled carrots and squash. As for me, I greedily accepted the little drop of alcohol that they often offered me; and as the feast went on, my eyelids began to grow heavy and I was already slightly drunk by the time we got around to eating dinner. I cannot remember ever having gone to bed on a Friday night; I suppose I used to fall asleep while still at table, as I have often seen Kalla fall asleep, her white face disappearing beneath her beautiful black hair.

Sleep, when one has no worries, tastes like honey. We woke up without haste, and found ourselves in a morning filled with an unusual happiness. We stayed longer in bed, where Father helped us perform complicated acrobatics. Then, once we had annoyed Father and driven him out of bed, we stared at the world upside down, with our heads down and our legs propped against the wall, enjoying the exquisite vertigo that made us dizzy. Oh, these Saturday mornings! In our room, through the wide-open window, the blue stretches of sky with their slow white clouds and the streaming sunlight, the sun swimming in the limitless universe as in those dreams where I felt myself rise and rise in the open sky, my heart and my breast so brimful. .. .So far away, I still suffer whenever I think of Saturday

mornings. All my life, the bitter and oily odor of the narcissus, their fresh explosion of gold in the transparent glass of the bowl, will remain rich with implications of holiday.

My father was in no hurry to finish dressing and took unusual pains, letting a few drops of eau de Cologne fall on his shining hair. I always demanded the same ritual for myself, but immediately protested when the alcohol made my eyes and my scalp smart. But it was already too late: "Let it be and don't be silly, it's good for the skin." Mother would hasten to dress me and always ask my father: "Will you be taking your son along?" My father would ask me: "Do you want to come along?" as if it were possible for me to refuse the greatest joy of the whole week. Then we would wait for the faithful Joseph. Ten years earlier my father's only workman had renounced his Italian origin and had changed his name from Giuseppe to Joseph so as to become part of our family. My father trusted him fully in the shop and chose him also as his companion for all holiday pleasures. When, one day, Joseph talked of getting married, my father opposed this project so violently that we were all astonished. Obscurely, my father sensed that Joseph would then belong to his wife and become Giuseppe again; his opposition was so successful that Joseph remained an old bachelor. So he still turned up every Saturday, looking ungainly and odd in his best suit-the "Sunday best" of the careful poor-pants and a jacket of fawn-colored cloth and a white artificial silk scarf that bore the marks of having been pressed with too hot an iron. Our housewives, in North Africa, seem to press clothes badly: they are either in a hurry or try to do the job too well, laboring at the iron as if to give what they are pressing a sheen of newness that it has long since lost, as if care could somehow compensate for wear and tear. Whenever Joseph happened to turn up late, my father would be upset, but Joseph allowed him to grumble without answering back, staring at his shoes that were always of a light spring or fall model and well aware of the fact that he was at fault. We had to go to Bodineau's store to choose some leather and to Sarfati's to renew our stock of whip-thongs. Joseph never objected that my father's store did not belong to him or that Saturday was a holiday and he was free to spend his time as best suited him. Like my father, he was part and parcel of the store and it was the store that kept us all alive.

The street was lazy and relaxed like a young girl's rose-colored vision of dawn. We had long given up going to the synagogue on Saturdays and visited our suppliers instead, but Saturday was still a holy day. We felt pure and clean and had the assurance of the well-dressed who enjoy leisure. Besides, we usually met the faithful on their way back from Temple, walking daintily in the soft sunshine, holding with the tips of their fingers their book and the little bag that contained their taleth. Fat and happy, their faces quite unresponsive, they went along unhurriedly, as sure of the absolute harmony of the universe as they were of finding their home full of flowers perfuming the air, with a white cloth on the heavily laden table.

Toward eleven o'clock there would appear, at the end of our walk and impressing my gaze with their great pomp, the huge stores of Bodineau. They dominated this whole part of town, both by their location and their proportions and by their wealth of window space and nickel fixtures. One reached the main entrance up a flight of rather high steps on either side of which a large showcase, each as big as our room, triumphantly reflected the sunlight on the town. The showcase on the right was the home of a fabulous beast that shared the enchantment of Sabbath: a whole horse, all harnessed with brand-new leather that was studded with gold, its eyes blazing, its reddish and white-haired chest borne proudly aloft. I admired it each time for a long while, though without coming too close to it and always clutching my father's hand.

THE TREASURE

by I.L. Peretz

It's no pleasure to sleep in July in a room, four by four, together with a wife and eight little children, especially on a Friday night. That's why Shmeril, the woodcutter, woke up after midnight, hot and breathless. Quickly he poured water over his fingers, grabbed his robe, and ran barefoot out of his suffocating hellhole. When he came out on the street-all was quiet, all streets were closed, and a high, quiet, starry sky covered the sleeping, little town. It seemed to him that now he was along with God (blessed by He!). Looking up to heaven he exclaimed: "Well, Creator of the Universe, this is the time to listen to me and to bless me with a treasure out of the abundance of your treasures."

Hardly had he uttered these words than he saw ahead of him an odd little flame running out of the town. "This must be the treasure," he reasoned.

He wanted to run after it. He recalled, however, that a person must not run on the Sabbath. So he walked on after the flame. Strangely enough, no matter how slowly he walked, the flame proceeded at an equally slow pace and the distance between himself and the flame neither increased nor decreased. He kept on walking and at times something in his heart told him: "Shmeril, don't be a fool, take off your robe, dash over, and throw it on the flame!"

He realized, however, that such an idea must stem from the Tempter to Evil. He did indeed take off his robe; he seemed ready to throw it; but, just to spite the Tempter, he took still smaller steps and was gratified to see that, at once, the flame also moved more slowly. And so he followed the flame at a moderate pace and, walking on, he gradually got toward the outskirts of the town.

The road twisted and turned, past fields and meadows, and the distance between himself and the flame never grew wider or narrower. Were he to throw the robe, it would not reach up to the flame.

Meanwhile, his thoughts became confused: if only he would catch the treasure, he wouldn't have to be a woodcutter in his old age; he no longer had the strength he once had for this work; he could buy his wife a pew in the synagogue, in the section reserved for women, so that her Sabbaths and Festivals would not be spoiled by her not being permitted to sit anywhere. Poor woman! On the High Holidays, she was always falling off her feet. The bearing of children had sapped her strength! He would make her a new dress; he would buy her a few strings of pearls. He would send his children to better schools; he would start looking about for a match for his oldest daughter. At present, she helped her mother to carry the baskets of fruit and never had time to comb herself properly; yet, she had long braids, such long braids, and eyes like a gazelle's.

It would be fine, if the Treasure could be caught!

"Again the Tempter," he mused. "If the Treasure isn't meant for me, then I'll have to get along without it." Were this a week-day, he would know what to do. Were his eldest son Yankel here, the urchin wouldn't be so passive. . . children nowadays. . .who knows what they are doing on a Sabbath?. . .The younger son wasn't any better either, always ridiculing the teacher. Let the teacher but try to slap them, why they would tear his beard off. . .and who has time to look after them? What with chopping and sawing all day!. . .

Shmeril sighed and walked ever farther. Every once in a while, he lifted an eye to heaven: "O Creator of the Universe, whom do you want to test here! Shmeril the Woodcutter? If you want to give, give!"

At this moment it seemed to him as if the Treasure were beginning to move a little more slowly. But just then he heard a dog barking. He recognized the barking: it originated in Visoke, the first village beyond the town. In the fresh pre-dawn atmosphere, he saw white spots coming into view. These were the houses of Visoke peasants. This reminded him that he had walked about as far as one may on the Sabbath. He stopped.

"Yes, I've reached the Sabbath-limit," he mused. "You won't lead me astray! You are not sent by God. For God does not make a mockery of man-and this is tomfoolery!" He got rather angry at the adversary and so turned around and hastily retraced his steps towards the town. He made up his mind: "I won't mention this matter to anybody at home. In the first place, they wouldn't believe me, even if I did mention it. And, in the second place, if they did believe me they would laugh at me! Besides, what is there to boast of? The Creator of the Universe knows-that suffices. My wife might even become angry, as far as I can tell. The children would surely be angry-naked and barefoot, poor things! Why should they transgress against the commandment: "Honor thy father!"

No, he wouldn't mention it. He wouldn't even remind God of the incident. If he, Shmeril, had done the proper thing, God would not fail to remember it. .

Suddenly he felt a strange happy calmness come over him. A quiet satisfaction permeated his limbs. "Money is after all trash. Wealth may even seduce a person from the right path." He wanted to thank God for not subjecting him to this test. He was so relieved that he felt like bursting into song: "Our Father, Our King"-he remembered this melody of his youth but stopped short abashed.

He tried to recall a synagogue chant-when suddenly he saw that the same flame, which he left behind, had emerged in front of him and that it was moving slowly before him. . . The distance between himself and the flame grew neither larger nor smaller. It seemed as if the flame were out for a walk and as if he too were walking a bit, in honor of the Sabbath. His quiet happiness persisted. He looked about. The sky was turning paler. The little stars were beginning to fade. There was a slight reddening in the East and the reddish tinge flowed along like a river, narrow and long.

The flame, meanwhile, continued to move. It entered the town and proceeded to his street. There was his house. He saw the door wide open. Apparently, he had forgotten to close it. . .

. . . And now, the flame went in, it was inside his home! He followed it. He saw it creep under his bed. Everybody was still sleeping in the room. He walked over quietly, bent down, and saw the flame under his bed spinning on its axis just like a top. He thereupon took his robe, threw it down under the bed, and covered the flame with it. Nobody heard what was going on, and now the first golden ray of morning stole through a slit into the room.

He sat down on the bed and made a vow that until the end of the Sabbath he would not breathe a word to anyone, not a single word. Otherwise, the Sabbath might be desecrated. His wife might not be able to control her curiosity. His son certainly would want to get to the bottom of this matter.

They would want to start counting immediately. They would want to find out how much. Soon the secret would be out. In the large synagogue, in the smaller houses of worship, in all the streets, the tale of his wealth would spread from mouth to mouth. . .the tale of his good fortune. . .and nobody would pray, nobody would wash for the blessings, nobody would perform the benedictions with the necessary devotion. He would cause his household to sin, and half the town as well. No, not a whisper. . . He stretched out on his bed and pretended to sleep. . .

In consideration of this piety, on his part, it came to pass that, when he bent down under the bed after Havdala and lifted up the gown, he discovered underneath a real bag with thousands upon thousands of gold pieces, an amount almost beyond imagining, an entire bedful of gold. He did indeed become a person of great wealth.

He spent the remaining years of his life in joy and contentment. Amidst his happiness, however, his wife had a habit of reproaching him: "Heavens! how can a man have such a heart of stone, not to mention a word throughout an entire summer's day, not a single word even to his wife. . .and I still recall that I wept so bitterly during the prayer 'God of Abraham' I cried so much. . . There wasn't a penny in the house."

He would comfort her with a smile: "Who knows? Perhaps it was in answer to your prayer 'God of Abraham!' that this reward came to us.

FREEDOM

WHO'S A SLAVE?

by Osher Epstein

Shalom. Yeh, it's me, Osher. Boy, my face is red again! Only this time, it isn't from not knowing about Ichud Habonim. All afternoon, I've been helping make the house ready for Pesach, and that meant running down to the basement three times to bring up the special dishes, cleaning the pantry shelves, helping unpack the Pesach groceries and, of course, testing the flavor of the 1959 matzot. Sure, I'm tired, but it's a good feeling -- if you know what I mean.

I've been looking through the Haggada and practicing the Kiddush, and I found the phrase which Moshe, our madrich, had read to us. You know, now I'm beginning to understand what it means. Remember when....but, I haven't told you the story yet.

It happened, as usual, at my last kvutza meeting. As soon as we were seated around the circle, Moshe smiled and said, "Congratulations and mazal tov! How does it feel to be free men?"

I don't know, but Moshe has the funniest ways of starting sichot sometimes.

"Whadda ya mean 'congratulations?'" asked Lewi. "When were we slaves?"

"Oh, I would say about 3,000 years ago in a place called Egypt."

Then we all burst out laughing, saying, "You got the wrong guys, Moshe. We're too young."

But Moshe didn't laugh. Instead he took out a Haggada and read, "In every generation, every Jew should feel as though he himself took part in the Exodus from Egypt and should say: "It is because of what the L-rd did for me when I came forth from Egypt."

"So you see," he said, "I wasn't joking. How does it feel to have been a slave and gone out of Egypt?"

"Wonderful!" said Dan. "Best thing that ever happened to me!"

"But how can we know what it's like if we've never been slaves?"

That was Adina. She always asks good questions. Besides, she has red hair and I like red hair.

"Well, what do you think a slave is?" asked Moshe. And then we really went into the discussion.

It took a long time to decide what we meant. Tova talked about people being created equal, and Steve became really excited when he spoke of having to do things which you don't want to do and being treated like someone's property. Then, when we had all spoken and argued and told everyone he was wrong, we had our definition. "A slave," we said, "is someone who isn't able to do the things he wants to do and is entitled to, that is, someone who isn't treated as an equal." We asked Moshe what he thought.

"It's nice," he said, "but what good is it to know what a slave is?"

"So that we know what it was like in Egypt and what our people were freed from."

That was me. I don't have much red hair, but I can give good answers, too.

"All right, Mr. Freed Slave." he said, "so what's with your freedom now?"

"Well, if I'm free, I want to go out and walk around like a free man."

"Sure, just like leaving Egypt. Say, Moshe, can we try it?" asked Sarah.

Then Moshe stood up, took a mop handle and pointing it, said, "Bayit door, I mean, Red Sea, open up and let the children of Israel pass through!"

We laughed, and san "MiMitzrayim Gealtanu," and when the "Red Sea" opened (after we had pushed it a little), we marched out into freedom. Up and down the streets we went, singing a few songs, telling each other how good free air felt, and even looking behind a few times to see if the Egyptians were chasing us. Moshe seemed to think he was really his namesake because he was waving his mop handle and telling us when to turn and how fast to walk.

Soon we were pretty far from the bayit. In fact, I thought Moshe was lost because we were coming into a strange part of the city. There wasn't much grass around, and the streets were dirty. The houses all needed a coat of paint and some repairs. Here a garbage pail was turned over, and there we saw some old furniture lying outside a house.

Then Moshe took us into the hall of one of the apartment building. "Guess how many people live her?" he asked. There were three stories and two sides so we figured around six families. But he showed us the names on the bells. We all became quiet. Above each bell were the names of four to six families.

"Thirty families in a building like this! How do they do it?"

"That's easy," he said. "You just have one or two rooms for the family and share a bathroom".

Some of us grunted. This was no sight for slaves on their first day of freedom.

"And don't think the rent is easy either," said Moshe. "Many of these single rooms cost about $70 a month".

Then Ahrona spoke up. "Why don't these people move then? There are plenty of jobs and they must have money because there are lots of new cars on the streets."

"They'd like to," said Moshe, "but there aren't many places to go to. Some people don't want Negroes moving into their neighborhoods. They say they're dirty and will spoil the buildings."

"Sure this is dirty, but what do you expect?" I said. "I wonder how clean my neighborhood would be if we had so many people living in each building."

"Moshe," asked Debby, "you mean these people couldn't move if they wanted to? But we said that a slave was a person who couldn't....."

"....do the things he wanted to do and was entitled to. That's right. And that isn't the only thing they can't do."

We walked outside again, and as we passed the old houses and the patched windows and the cluttered alleys, he told us about some other restrictions. We learned about restaurants which wouldn't let Negroes eat in them, and colleges which told every Negro student that he had failed the entrance examination even if he were an honor student in high school. Moshe told us about the time he was waiting for a job and the employment manager told all the Negroes that there were no jobs open while he hired everyone else.

As we walked back to the bayit, we didn't sing very much. Somehow the joy of being a free man wasn't very sweet when you knew there were slaves in your own city.

Once we were back, we began to crowd Moshe with a lot of questions.

"Why isn't something done about this?" "How can this go on?" "What can we do?"

"Hold it, hold it! I can't answer everthing at once. The first thing you can do is begin understanding how the Negro feels, and why sometimes he acts the way he does. Then, if you speak to enough people, and write enough letters, and try all the ways to improve conditions, maybe something can be done!

"Now I guess you understand a big reason for reading the Haggada on Pesach. You see, not only are we celebrating our own freedom, but we're remembering all the people who aren't free. And we, who were once slaves, feel that it is our job to work as hard as we can to make other people free. And this isn't the only lack of freedom. Why, we see slavery almost every day in many places."

Just then, Gaby started to say something but Mel interrupted him and began to talk. "Hold it, Mel," said Moshe. "Gaby was first. And Mel, this is what I mean. You shouldn't break in on someone. Are you trying to make him a slave?"

"Make him a slave? Stop kidding!"

"But remember our definition. When you stopped Gaby from speaking, you didn't let him to something which he wanted to do and is entitled to. I wonder if all of us don't sometimes try to make slaves of the people in our kvutza not only this way but others. I remember one election when..."

"Who? Us?"

"Think it over," said Moshe, "but we'll save that for another sicha."

TANACH

Book: The Prophets by Abraham J. Heschel. The Jewish Publication Society of America, N. Y., 1962. Harper & Row Publishers.

AMOS

AMOS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Under the long and brilliant raign of Jeroboam II (ca. 786-746 B.C.E.), the Northern Kingdom, also called the Kingdom of Israel, reached the summit of its material power and prosperity, expanding its territory northward at the expense of Hamath and Damascus, and southward at the expense of Judah. During this entire period Assyria was weak, and Syria on the decline; Jeroboam took advantage of the weakness of both to extend his dominion, foster commerce, and accumulate wealth.

When Amos appeared in the North there was pride (6:13-14), plenty, and splendor in the land, elegance in the cities, and might in the palaces. The rich had their summer and winter palaces adorned with costly ivory (3:15), gorgeous couches with damask pillows (3:12), on which they reclined at their sumptuous feasts. They planted pleasant vineyards, anointed themselves with precious oils (6:4-6: 5:11); their women, compared by Amos to the fat cows of Bashan, were addicted to wine (4:1). At the same time there was no justice in the land (3:10), the poor were afflicted, exploited, even sold into slavery (2:6-8; 5:11), and the judges were corrupt (5:12). In the midst of this atmosphere arose Amos, a shepherd, to exclaim:

> Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,
> And to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria,
> The notable men of the first of the nations,
> To whom the house of Israel come!
> Pass over to Calneh, and see;
> And thence go to Hamath the great;
> Then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
> Are they better than these kingdoms?
> Or is their territory greater than your territory,
> O you who put far away the evil day,
> And bring near the seat of violence?
> Woe to those who lie upon beds of ivory,
> And stretch themselves upon their couches,
> And eat lambs from the flock,
> And calves from the midst of the stall;
> Who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,
> And like David invent for themselves instruments of music;
> Who drink wine in bowls,
> And anoint themselves with the finest oils,
> But are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
> Therefore they shall now be the first of those to go into exile,
> And the revelry of those who stretch themselves shall pass away.
>
> Amos 6:1-7

Amos was working as a shepherd and dresser of sycamore trees when he was suddenly overwhelmed by God and called to be a prophet. Although his home was in Tekoa, a village southeast of Bethlehem in the Kingdom of Judah, his utterances were all directed against the Kingdom in the North, against

Samaria, Bethel, and the rulers of the land.

> Fallen, no more to rise,
> Is the virgin Israel;
> Forsaken on her land,
> With none to raise her up.
> Amos 5:2

"The end has come upon My people Israel," the Lord said to him in a vision (8:2).

What is the nature of Him whose word overwhelmed the herdsman Amos? Is His grandeur like a towering mountain? Is His majesty comparable to an inscrutable constellation? Is He sublime as the morning and mysterious as darkness? All comparisons fade to insignificance when confronted with what a person such as Amos asserted:

> For lo, He who forms the mountains, and creates the wind,
> And declares to man what is his thought;
> Who makes the morning darkness,
> And treads on the heights of the earth--
> The Lord, the God of hosts, is His name....
> He who made the Pleiades and Orion,
> And turns deep darkness into the morning,
> And darkens the day into night,
> Who calls for the waters of the sea,
> And pours them out upon the surface of the earth,
> The Lord is His name,
> Who makes destruction flash forth against the strong,
> So that destruction comes upon the fortress.
> Amos 4:13; 5:8-9

When Amos called upon the people to "seek the Lord and live" (5:6), he meant literally what he said. His words raged, proclaiming God's loathing for all men to know (6:8; 5:21).

THE ANGER OF THE LORD

Yet the anger of the Lord was directed not only at the nations, but also at the people He had chosen. The people of Judah had rejected the Torah of the Lord, and had not kept His statutes (2:4). And the people of Israel, the Northern Kingdom (the creditors),

> ...sell the righteous for silver
> And the needy for a pair of shoes--
> They that trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth,
> And turn aside the way of the afflicted.
> Amos 2:6, 7; cf. 5:11

Man may remain callous, but God cannot keep silent. Terrible is His voice, because He has a heart.

The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds....
I will make the sun go down at noon,
And darken the earth in broad daylight.
I will turn your feasts into mourning,
And all your songs into lamentation;
I will bring sackcloth upon all loins,
And baldness on every head;
I will make it like the mourning for an only son,
And the end of it like a bitter day.
Amos 8:7, 9-10

It was not only iniquity that had aroused the anger of the Lord; it was also piety, upon which His words fell like a thunderbolt. Sacrifice and ritual were regarded as the way that leads to the Creator. The men and the institutions dedicated to sacrificial worship were powerful and revered. Came a "dresser of Sycamores" from the wilderness of Judah and proclaimed the word of God:

Even though you offer Me your burnt offerings and cereal offerings,
I will not accept them,
And the peace offerings of your fatted beasts
I will not look upon.
Take away from Me the noise of your songs;
To the melody of your harps I will not listen.
But let justice well up as waters
And righteousness as a mighty stream.
Amos 5:22-24

The juxtaposition of observing the laws of the Sabbath while waiting for the day to come to an end and of dealing "deceitfully with false balances" (8:5) strikes home a melancholy irony, easily lost on the modern reader. Man is waiting for the day of sanctity to come to an end so that cheating and exploitation can be resumed. This is a stunning condemnation. We are ready to judge a ritual act on its own merit. Properly performed, its value is undisputed. Yet, the prophet speaks with derision of those who combine ritual with iniquity.

The prophet's invectives could not be tolerated by his people. And when he went so far as to predict in public that the king of Israel would die by the sword and that the people of Israel would be led away captive, the outraged priest of Bethel, Amaziah, said to Amos: "Go, flee away to the land of Judah...; never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom" (7:12-13).

But the prophet retorted:

I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, Go, prophesy to my people Israel.

Now therefore hear the word of the Lord.
You say, Do not prophesy against Israel,
And do not preach against the house of Isaac.
Therefore thus says the Lord:

Your wife shall be a harlot in the city,
And your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,
And your land shall be parceled out by line;
You yourself shall die in an unclean land,
And Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.
Amos 7:14-17

A REDEEMER PAINED BY THE PEOPLE'S FAILURE

Did Amos speak as a champion of ethics? Was it in the name of the moral law that the shepherd of Tekoa left his sheep to proclaim his message in Samaria? Amos insisted that it was God whose call he followed and whose living word he carried.

There is a living God who cares. Justice is more than an idea or a norm. Justice is a divine concern. What obtains between God and His people is not only a covenant of mutual obligations, but also a relationship of mutual concern. The message of God is not an impersonal accusation, but the utterance of a Redeemer who is pained by the misdeeds, the thanklessness of those whom He has redeemed. His words are plaintive and disconsolate.

I brought you up out of the land of Egypt,
And led you forty years in the wilderness,
To possess the land of the Amorite.
And I raised up some of your sons for prophets,
And some of your young men for Nazirites.
Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?...
But you made the Nazirites drink wine,
And commanded the prophets,
Saying, You shall not prophesy.
Amos 2:10-12

ICONOCLASM

The most beautiful face lends itself to caricature, to a ludicrous exaggeration of some of its features. And the sublime ideas of biblical faith are equally subject to caricature. As examples may be cited the idea of "the people of the Lord" and the idea of "the day of the Lord."

From the beginnings of Israelite religion the belief that God had chosen this particular people to carry out His mission has been both a cornerstone of Hebrew faith and a refuge in moments of distress. And yet, the prophets felt that to many of their contemporaries this cornerstone was a stumbling block; this refuge, an escape. They had to remind the people that chosenness must not be mistaken as divine favoritism or immunity from chastisement, but, on the contrary, that it meant being more seriously exposed to divine judgment and chastisement.

Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt:

You only have I known
Of all the families of the earth;
Therefore I will punish you
For all your iniquities.
Amos 3:1-2

Does chosenness mean that God is exclusively concerned with Israel? Does the Exodus from Egypt imply that God is involved only in the history of Israel and is totally oblivious of the fate of other nations?

> Are you not like the Ethiopians to Me,
> O people of Israel? says the Lord.
> Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt,
> And the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?
> Amos 9:7

The nations chosen for this comparison were not distinguished for might and prestige--countries such as Egypt or Assyria--but rather, nations which were despised and disliked. The color of the Ethiopians is black, and in those days many of them were sold on the slave markets. The Philistines were the archenemies of Israel, and the Syrians continued to be a menace to the Northern Kingdom. The God of Israel is the God of all nations, and all men's history is His concern.

There was a belief in the coming of "a day of the Lord," when God would triumph over all His enemies and establish His rule in the world. In the eyes of the multitude, that belief promised salvation for Israel, regardless of her conduct. The day of the Lord was seen as a day of punishment for pagans only rather than for all nations, Israel included.

> Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!
> Why would you have the day of the Lord?
> It is darkness, and not light;
> As if a man fled from a lion,
> And a bear met him;
> Or went into the house and leaned with his hand against the wall,
> And a serpent bit him.
> Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light,
> And gloom with no brightness in it?
> Amos 5:18-20

Amos tried to convey the sense of disappointment, God's aversion against the people. Indeed, what God demands of man is expressed not only in terms of action, but also in terms of passion. "I hate and abhor your feasts!" (5:21), says God. "Hate evil and love good" (5:15) is the great demand.

Is it conceivable that the prophet set forth God's powerful pathos in inner detachment? Does not the very fact of his conveying the pathos to the people imply an inner identification with it? We know that standing before God, Amos pleaded for the people. What, then, was his feeling when he stood before the people?

> Does a lion roar in the forest,
> When he has no prey?
> Does a young lion cry out from his den
> If he has taken nothing?
> Does a bird fall in a snare on the earth,
> When there is no trap for it?
> Does a snare spring up from the ground,
> When it has taken nothing?

Is a trumpet blown in a city,
And the people are not afraid?
Does evil befall a city,
Unless the Lord has done it?
Surely the Lord God does nothing,
Without revealing His secret
To His servants the prophets.
The lion has roared;
Who will not fear?
The Lord God has spoken;
Who can but prophesy?
Amos 3:4-8

Amos, a prophet to whom the call of God came as a surprise and stayed on as dismay, is startled. The voice of God is compared with the roar of a lion about to fall upon its prey; Israel, God's chosen people, is the prey. And no one hears, no one trembles. All save the prophet are deaf and complacent. Yet Amos' reaction is not fear but the inner compulsion to convey what the voice proclaims; not escape for shelter, but identification with the voice.

It seems amazing that in the book of Amos, which proclaims that God's supreme concern is righteousness and that His essential demand of man is to extablish justice, God is compared with a lion in search of its prey. To Amos the good is not apart from God. At times God's call is, "Seek Me"; at other times, "Seek the good." He who seeks a lion will end as a victim, but Amos hears that Israel can live only in seeking God.

For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel:
Seek Me and live;...
Seek good, and not evil,
That you may live;...
Hate evil, and love good,
And establish justice in the gate;...
Amos 5:4; 5:14, 15

AN ENCOUNTER WILL SAVE

This seems to be Amos' premise: God does not leave man in the dark; He communicates His thought to man.

For lo, He Who forms the mountains, and creates the wind,
And declares to man what is His thought;...
The Lord, the God of hosts, is His name!
Amos 4:13

Indeed, the prophecy of Amos that begins with a message of doom concludes with a vision of hope (9:11 ff.)

Amos is so overwhelmed by his inspiration that there is little differentiation in his message between revelation and response. Conveying the word of God, he rarely (5:1-2, 15; 7:2, 5) adds his own word. There is no explicit statement of his sympathy, but only intimations of inner identifications and agreement.

Do two walk together,
Unless they have made an appointment?...
Surely the Lord God does nothing,
Without revealing His secret
To His servants the prophets.
Amos 3:3,7

These lines suggest a relation of intimacy, characteristic of those who are in close contact with one another and who have opened their hearts or their minds to such a degree that they deeply know and understand one another. Intimacy, however, never becomes familiarity. God is the Lord, and the prophets are His servants.

The prophet regards himself as one who walks together with God. God and he have agreed.

It is in the light of such sympathy, of such inner identification with the divine disappointment and aversion, that the spirit of Amos can be understood.

Amos' compassion for his people is profound. When beholding a vision of how "the Lord God was calling for a judgment by fire...it devoured the land," he prayed for mercy (7:4 ff.). And yet he also identified himself with God's threat of doom for the whole people. This is the burden of a prophet: compassion for man and sympathy for God.

ISAIAH

As happened in the time of Noah and as is happening again, God's patience and longsuffering are exhausted. He is tired of man. He hates man's homage, his festivals, his celebrations. Man has become a burden and a sorrow for God.

What to Me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
Says the Lord;
I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
And the fat of fatted beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
Or of lambs, or of he-goats.
When you come to appear before Me,
Who requires of you
This trampling of My courts?
Bring no more vain offerings;
Incense is an abomination to Me.
New moon and sabbath and the calling of assemblies--
I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.
Your new moons and your appointed feasts
My soul hates;
They have become a burden to Me.
That I am weary to bear.
When you spread forth your hands,
I will hide My eyes from you;
Even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
Your hands are full of blood.
Isaiah 1:11-15

THE VISION OF ISAIAH

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and His train filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim; each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory.

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!

Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said: Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven. And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here I am! Send me. And he said, Go, and say to this people:

Hear and hear, but do not understand;
See and see, but do not perceive.
Make the heart of this people fat,
And their ears heavy,
And shut their eyes;
Lest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their hearts,
And turn and be healed.

Then I said, How long, O Lord? And He said:

Until cities lie waste without inhabitant,
And houses without men,
And the land is utterly desolate,
And the Lord removes men far away,
And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.
And though a tenth remain it it,
It will be burned again,
Like a terebinth or an oak,
Whose stump remains standing when it is felled.
The holy seed is its stump.

Isaiah 6

Sins affect His attitude temporarily; they cannot alter His relationship radically. God's love of Israel is eternal. Is it conceivable that sin, the work of man, should destroy what is intimately divine and eternal? For the reason of His eternal attachment is

Because you are precious in My eyes,
And honored, and I love you....
For a brief moment I forsook you,
But with great compassion I will gather you.

In overflowing wrath for a moment
I hid My face from you,
But with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,
Says the Lord, your Redeemer.
Can a woman forget her suckling child,
That she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?
Even these may forget
Yet I will not forget you
For the mountains may depart
And the hills be removed
But My steadfast love shall not depart from you,
And My covenant of peace shall not be removed,
Says the Lord, Who has compassion on you.
Isaiah 43:4; 54:7-8; 49:15; 54:10

I will pour My spirit upon your descendants,
And My blessing on your offspring.
I have put My words in your mouth,
And hid you in the shadow of My hand,
To plant heaven,
To establish earth,
Saying to Zion, You are My people.
Isaiah 44:3; 51:16; cf. Joel 2:28 (H.3:1)

Just as prior to the exile individual prophets addressed themselves to Israel, Israel now addresses herself to the nations. Like Jeremiah, Israel was called to her task from the earliest moment of her existence (Jer. 1:5).

Listen to me, O coastlands,
Hearken, you peoples from afar.
The Lord called me from the womb,
From the body of my mother He named my name.
He made my mouth like a sharp sword,
In the shadow of His hand He hid me;
He made me a polished arrow,
In His quiver He hid me away.
He said to me, You are My servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.
Isaiah 49:1-3

Israel is more than an instrument in God's design. Israel is made to be "a witness to the peoples" (55:4). "You are My witnesses!" (44:8). Israel is called to be

A light to the nations,
To open the eyes that are blind,
To bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
From the prison those who sit in darkness.
Isaiah 42:6-7

PREDICTION OF PEACE

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:4)

THREE PROPHETS--THUMBNAIL SKETCHES

AMOS

Amos appears as the first of the really great prophets.

Historic Conditions -- Amos lived at the time when Israel, under the reign of King Jereboam, reached great heights of economic prosperity and of military achievements. The natural rivalry between Israel and Damascus was drawing to a close. Israel had gained supremacy, Egypt was still too feeble to become a factor and Assyria had only commenced its upward rise, which eventually would end in the conquest of Israel.

From Amos we learn that the profits of commerce as well as the spoils from the reconquered lands -- at the East and West of Jordan -- all contributed to an era of luxury in Israel. Yet if the people were rich and indulgent, they also became increasingly selfish and forgetful of elementary human rights. While the upper class had all they wanted, the poorer classes and especially the peasants had become impoverished and even enslaved by the burden of heavy taxation, and the yoke of continued warfare.

Amos the Man -- Amos was and always remained a man of the country. By profession he was a shepherd. His home was at Tekoa in southern Judea, a region which is semi-desert in nature. Amos remained intimate with nature and in constant sympathy with the rural aspects of Jewish life. He looked back at nomadic times in Jewish history as an ideal period, when economic and social equality ruled supreme within the folds of the tribes.

Once he accepted the prophecy as his avocation, he started to visit the most important cities and holy places in the northern states -- that is, Bet-El, Gilgal, Samaria. It might be a bit surprising to us that Amos should do his main work far away from his native south and in the cities rather than in the villages. However, this fact enabled the prophet to approach his work with a certain detachment. He had no part in the current way of life of the city. He, therefore, is not only divorced from its evil practices but also, he never identifies himself with some of the sufferings of the people as Yermiyahu did.

While Yermiyahu suffered, fought as well as pitied the common people, Amos remained aloof. He is moral rather than impassionate. Little remains in writing that tells us about his life. There remains only one picture which gives us some insight into his life. Amos prophesied: the sanctuaries shall be laid waste and I will rise against the house of Jereboam with a sword. Amatziah, the priest of Bet-El, informed the King of his seditious words. Was Amos preparing the way for arebellion against the ruling King? Amatziah accused Amos of prophesying for material gain. Foretelling peace when he received food, and war when food was refused him. Amos answered proudly: "I am no prophet, neither am I a prophet's son. I am a shepherd!" If Amos wasn't put to death for his prophecy, then it was only because the priest traditionally feared the supernatural powers of the man of vision.

The Ideas of Amos -- There is no reason to doubt that Amos shocked his contemporaries by denying that the Jews were a privileged people. G-d would let them be destroyed if their sins would demand it. Previously, most people had believed that the keeping of rituals and the covenant would give them some sort of immunity in face of their moral shortcomings. Yet the G-d of Amos is no longer the G-d

of any one nation: he is the supreme judge and his laws of justice are applicable to all nations and all men. For him divinity meant justice and especially social justice. To him the most terrible of sins is exploitation of the small by the big, creditors that know no pity, judges without conscience, and unscrupulous traders. He objects to the people's rich houses, their luxurious feasts and their un-Jewish ways of life. He contrasts their luxuries with the taxes and toils of the poor. These abuses, as we have seen, are the results of the transition from the pastoral way of life of the tribes to the civilization of the cities. In Amos' teaching, the word "good" assumes definite moral qualities. He attacks foreign nations not only for the bad that they have done to Israel, but also because of any morally bad deed in their relationship with other nations.

He felt sure that the morality of the Jews would lead them to a catastrophe, but he did not predict their complete extermination. Some better nucleus would remain and revive the nation.

In brief, Amos tried to see the religion as a spiritual belief in absolute justice. He denied that Israel's bond with the divine immunizes them to divine punishment. Amos identified himself with the principles of equality and fraternity as practiced by the nomadic tribes.

YERMIYAHU

Historic Conditions -- He lived at one of the most critical periods of history. One of the really great kings of the Assyrian Empire, Ashurbanipal died and the great Empire started to disintegrate. Babylonia under the Chaldean Kings became independent and eventually crushed the weakened Assyria. Egypt threw in her lot with Assyria but they were unable to save Nineveh and in 605 B. C. E. were finally defeated. This was the final occasion and Egypt appeared as a world power. At first, Judea did not bother the Chaldean Kings, but as a result of Egyptian intrigues the Jews became troublesome and Nebuchadnezzar was compelled to use force against various uprisings. The inevitable result was the invasion of Judea by strong Chaldean armies resulting in the capture of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E.

Yermiyahu the Man -- Yermiyahu came as a youngster from his native village of Anatot to the large city of Jerusalem. He brings from the desert view of his village, the naive belief in complete honesty. Once Yermiyahu had been persuaded to accept the call of the prophecy, he saw it as his supreme duty to tell the people that their way of life would bring about a catastrophe for the whole country. It was this sense of impending destruction that lends its special nature to the book of Yermiyahu. While Yeshayahu demanded of the country not to ally herself with other nations and objected to a possible submission to Assyria, Yermiyahu demanded explicitly the coming to terms with Babylonia. There is no doubt that his analysis of hiw own time was the correct one. (Remember that he lived after Yeshayahu, when the world constellation was different.) The ruling classes of his time could not possibly accept his gloomy analysis and Yermiyahu was actively persecuted throughout his entire life. Yet, there is much evidence that his feeling of impending doom was not an isolated one but was shared by at least some sections of the community, and especially by those Jews who were still in sympathy with the traditional rural way of Jewish life. This may be borne out by the fact that Yermiyahu was saved several times from death penalties by people who must have felt that this man was only expressing an opinion which was already rampant in some sections of the nation.

The Ideas of Yermiyahu -- "Oh L-rd, I cannot speak, for I am but a child!" was the response Yermiyahu made to his divine call. It was indeed typical of this man. All his life he felt himself an extremely insignificant creature, tempermentally unfit for any sort of public life. He would have preferred to continue his rural life -- for he, like Amos, was acquainted with nature and wildlife. He never managed to disguise his feelings. He was a man of strong affections and his writings reflect the most human of prophets. He suffered a lot from the self-imposed barrier which kept him from closer human relationships. That, however, should not be construed as a personal disability, for one can see by the response of his loyal secretary, Baruch Ben-Ner, who noted down many of the prophet's speeches, that the prophet had a very warm personality indeed and this well fitted him for friendship and human relationships.

Yermiyahu is often misunderstood as a mournful pessimist. He certainly was unhappy because of his double identification -- devoted equally to his G-d and his people. Not only was he aware of the spiritual perils to his people by their increasing estrangement from basic values of moral and religious life, but he also realized that the course of history was to bring Judea to ruinous ends. For something like 40 years he lived with the certainty of coming destruction. He could have been happy only at the cost of truth.

"I looked on the earth -- and saw chaos ride birth,
At the heavens -- and from them no light broke;
I looked on the hills in their agony thrills
All the mountains did totter and quake.
I looked over the ground -- no man there I found,
All the birds had winged far their flight,
Unto Carmel I faced and its gardens were waste
All was blasted beneath the full blight. (Yermiyahu IV: 23-26)

In his ideas he added little to those that had been evolved by his predecessors. He resembled Micha, and his positive ideas add but little to the concept of justice, love (hesed) and faith that were created by Amos, Hoshea, and Yeshayahu. Yet, Yermiyahu was himself greater and more significant than his ideas.

Yermiyahu struggled for almost 40 years when seeking the fulfillment of some of his most momentous and terrible visions. When such fulfillment failed to come, Yermiyahu fought in order to liberate himself from his divine call. He struggled with G-d as he struggled with himself and with men. He always remains human. He sometimes speaks with almost primitive hatred of the revenge he wants to take against those who have wronged him, in response to his attack against the morals and politics of his time -- for he is human and he is a fighter.

In the ancient view of religion, the relations between religion and man was never a personal one but an intermediate one by means of the community and its appointed representative (the priest). It was Yermiyahu who was the first of the great "modern" religious leaders who was divorced from the traditional forms of his people's spiritual life, and who recorded for us his personal struggle with the divine and spiritual powers. Yermiyahu's life was a life of agony of the spirit.

Oesterly and Robinson summarize this particular aspect in these words. "Historically it is to the lifelong torture of the soul that man owes one of his most glorious possessions. Yermiyahu, not through his words but through his experience, gave the world more than any man in the history of Judaism."

Yermiyahu based religion on the personal experience of the individual.

YESHAYAHU

It is now a generally accepted theory that the Book of Yeshayahu consists actually of the work and lives of three different personalities. This is indicated by differences in style, historical perspective and opinion. However, we shall not concern ourselves here with the three composite personalities but only with the first, and most important prophet, called Yeshayahu.

Historic Conditions -- The Assyrian empire has now gained supremacy. Israel, the meeting place of nations, becomes engaged in an internal struggle between opposing parties and factions. We know of the pro-Egyptian party, the pro-Babylonians and the anti-Assyrian party which won the day. Assyria defeated Israel easily. The reason Assyria so easily out-ran Israel was the moral deterioration of the country. The nation had grown wealthy, but prosperity became a dividing factor as the majority of people had fallen into poverty. There was an internal canker which eventually caused the loss of national independence.

Yeshayahu the Man--There is much internal evidence that Yeshayahu was a man of the nobility of Jerusalem. He was in every respect a man of the city, using metaphors of his beloved Jerusalem throughout his writings. He was well acquainted with nobles and undoubtedly recognized by kings. His words were well received with much respect even though his advise was not always heeded. He showed his self-confidence by the ease with which he accepted the prophetic call. Contrast his immediate and voluntary acceptance with the hesitancy of men like Gideon, Moshe and Yermiyahu. The same self-assurance is reflected both in his eloquent and classic style, as well as in his dealings with other people. No other prophetic book has lent itself so readily to quotations as the book of Yeshayahu. Yet, with all his grand style and self-assurance there are some moments in his life when Yeshayahu is very akin to the ancient navi, the ecstatic fervent prophecy. Yeshayahu went as far as to walk almost naked in the street of his beloved Jerusalem in order to demonstrate the fate of the nation, if they attempted to overthrow Assyria.

The Ideas of Yeshayahu--It must have been typical of him that he should see in the relationship between G-d and his chosen people that of a king and his people. Yeshayahu saw the moral misbehavior of the Jewish people not so much as an injustice but a rebellion against their rightful ruler. He opposed any armed uprising against mighty Assyria, not only because of political conclusions. He knew only too well that Assyria had become the most powerful nation of his time. He opposed the uprising because of his conviction that the ills of Jerusalem were not connected with the enemy from without. Their main task was to improve the people from within. At the same time he opposed any attempt of surrender or even courting the favor of other nations. Those who trust in their beliefs don't need the additonal assurance of temporary alignments with other nations.

However, the moral depravity continued unabated and like all the other major prophets, Yeshayahu became increasingly convinced that a catastrophe was inevitable. Yet, within this feeling of coming doom, he is far more comforting than either Amos or Hoshea. He creates two beliefs that have greatly influenced the philosophies of religion. He was quite definite in his claim that G-d would never desert his chosen people completely -- even after the final fall a remnant would survive. This remnant would rebuild Zion.

The second belief centered on the coming of a person who would lead this chosen remnant towards the revival of the ancient and good Jewish people. It was in keeping with Yeshayahu's personality that he would visualize this Messiah as a mighty Jewish king rather than a learned priest. Yeshayahu was more of a national prophet than either Amos or Hoshea. His national loyalty is shown in his compromises with the King Hezekia. Another belief that may have had some unfortunate influence on future generations was that the holy city of Jerusalem is unconquerable. In addition, he stressed a new aspect of monotheism, faith and holiness. This holiness was not an abstract quality to him; it was a divine example of completeness and goodness, and to this example every human being should aspire. This new holiness is then the standard set by a kingly lord to be followed and initiated, not only worshipped from afar. Yeshayahu was the only prophet who seemed to have encouraged and educated followers.

SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

THE BILL OF RIGHTS

ARTICLES IN ADDITION TO, AND AMENDMENT OF, THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, PROPOSED BY CONGRESS, AND RATIFIED BY THE LEGISLATURES OF THE SEVERAL STATES, PURSUANT TO THE FIFTH ARTICLE OF THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

ARTICLE II.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

ARTICLE III.

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

ARTICLE IV.

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

ARTICLE V.

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

ARTICLE VI.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

ARTICLE VII.

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

ARTICLE VIII.

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

ARTICLE IX.

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

ARTICLE X.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

PRIEST AND PROPHET

by Ahad Ha'am

We learn from the science of mechanics that the impact of two forces moving in different directions -- one eastward, for example, and one northward -- will produce a movement in an intermediate direction. At a time when men were accustomed to attribute all motion to a guiding will, they may have explained this phenomenon by supposing that the two original forces made a compromise, and agreed that each should be satisfied with a little, so as to leave something for the other. Nowadays, when we distinguish between volitional and mechanical motion, we know that this "compromise" is not the result of a conscious assent on the part of the two forces; that, on the contrary, each of them plays for its own hand, and endeavors not to be turned from its course even a hair's breadth; and that it is just this struggle between them that produces the intermediate movement, which takes a direction not identical with either of the other two.

The motions of the heavenly bodies are determined, as is well known, not only by the relation of each one to the sun, but also by their influence on one another, by which each is compelled to swerve to some extent from the course that it would have pursued if left to itself. If, therefore, we were privileged, as Socrates was, to hear the "heavenly harmony," it may be that we should hear nothing but continual wrangling among the worlds above. We should find each one striving with all its might to make for itself a path according to its own particular bent, and unwilling to budge a single inch for the convenience of the others But it is just because the stars do behave thus that no single one has its own way; and so the external harmony is produced by the agency of all the stars, and without the consent of a single one. Nay, more: if, by some miracle, a few of the stars were suddenly smitten with what we call "generosity," and were enabled to get outside their own narrow point of view, and to understand and allow for the ambitions of their fellow-stars, and consequently made way for one another of their own accord, then the whole cosmic order would be destroyed at once, and chaos would reign once more.

Similarly, if it were possible to observe what happens in the microcosm of the human soul, we should see the same phenomenon there.

The ancient Jewish sages, who looked at the world through the glass of morality, saw only two primal forces at work in the spiritual life: the impulse to good and the impulse to evil. The conflict between these two opposing forces was as long as life itself: they fought unceasingly, unwearyingly, without possibility of peace, each striving for the complete fulfilment of its own end, even to the uttermost. The impulse to evil (so they held) was absolutely evil, redeemed by no single spark of goodness. They pictured it lying in wait for every man to the end of his days, tempting him to evil deeds and arousing in him base desires, ever tending mercilessly to drag him down to the lowest depths of sin and infamy. And, on the other side, they beheld the impulse to good as something

absolutely good; intolerant of evil in any form, in any degree, for any purpose; abominating all "the vanities of this world," even such as are necessary, because of their essential inferiority; striving ever to uplift a man higher and higher, to make him wholly spiritual. Each of the two principles is absolutely uncompromising; but it is just for this reason that their struggle results in a compromise and a certain balance of power. Neither of them is allowed to destroy the world by holding undivided sway. It happened once-so a charming Talmudic story relates -that the Righteous captured the impulse to evil, and clapped in in prison. For three whole days the impulse to good was sole ruler: "and they sought for a new laid egg, and none was found."

Modern European scholars, who investigate the soul from a very different point of view, find in it many more than two forces; but they describe the workings of those forces in much the same way. A French thinker, Paulhan, regards the human soul as a large community, containing innumerable individuals: that is to say; impressions, ideas, feelings, impulses, and so forth. Each of these individuals lives a life of its own, and struggles to widen the sphere of its influence, associating with itself all that is akin to its own character , and repelling all that is opposed to it. Each strives, in short, to set its own impress on the whole life of the soul. There is no mutual accommodation among them, no regard for one another. The triumph of one is the defeat of another; and the defeated idea or impulse never acquiesces in its defeat, but remains ever on the alert, waiting for a favorable opportunity to reassert itself and extend its dominion. And it is just through this action of the individual members of the spiritual community, with their mutual hatred and envy, that human life attains complexity and breadth, many sidedness and variety. It may happen in course of time, after much tossing about in different directions, that the soul reaches a condition of equilibrium; in other words, the spiritual life takes a definite middle course, from which it cannot be diverted by the sudden revolt of any of its powers, each of which is forcibly kept within bounds. This is the condition of "moral harmony," outwardly so beautiful, which the Greek philosophers -- those apostles of the beautiful -- regarded as the summit of human perfection.

It may be taken, then, as a general principle, that whenever we see a complex whole which captivates us by its many-sided beauty, we see the result of a struggle between certain primal forces, which are themselves simple and one-sided, and it is just this one-sidedness of the elements, each of which strives solely for its own end, but never attains it, that produces the complex unity, the established harmony of the whole.

This principle applies to social life, with all its many sides; and not least to its intellectual and moral aspects.

In the early history of any epoch-making idea there have always been men who have devoted to that idea, and to it alone, all their powers, both physical and spiritual. Such men as these look at the world exclusively from the point of view of their idea, and wish to save society by it alone. They take no account of all the other forces at work that are pulling in other directions; and they even disregard the limits that Nature herself

sets to their activities. They refuse to compromise; and, although conflicting forces and natural laws do not bow down before them, and they do not get their own way, yet their efforts are not wasted. They make the new idea a primal force, which drives the current of life in its own particular direction, as other forces in theirs; and the harmony of social life, being a product of the struggle between all the forces, is, therefore, bound to be affected more or less by the advent of this new force. But just as no one force ever obtains a complete and absolute victory, so there is no original idea that can hold its own unless it is carefully guarded by its adherents. If, as often happens, after the new idea has produced a certain effect, its adherents become "broad-minded," admit that things cannot go wholly one way, and acquiesce gladly in the enforced compromise produced by the conflict of forces: then they may, indeed, rise in the estimation of the masses, on whom the harmony of the community depends; but at the same time their idea will cease to be a primal force in its own right. Its influence will accordingly be further and further diminished by the action of other forces, old and new in their constantly watchful and internecine struggle -- a struggle in which our idea will have no special body of adherents to guard it and widen the sphere of its influence.

There are thus two ways of doing service in the cause of an idea; and the difference between them is that which in ancient days distinguished the Priest from the Prophet.

The Prophet is essentially a one-sided man. A certain moral idea fills his whole being, masters his every feeling and sensation, engrosses his whole attention. He can only see the world through the mirror of his idea; he desires nothing, strives for nothing, except to make every phase of the life around him an embodiment of that idea in its perfect form. His whole life is spent in fighting for this ideal with all his strength; for its sake he lays waste his powers, unsparing of himself, regardless of the conditions of life and the demands of the general harmony. His gaze is fixed always on what ought to be in accordance with his own convictions; never on what can be consistent with the general condition of things outside himself. The Prophet is thus a primal force. His actions affects the charachter of the general harmony, while he himself does not become a part of that harmony, but remains always a man apart, a narrow-minded extremist, zealous for his own ideal, and intolerant of every other. And since he cannot have all that he would, he is in a perpetual stage of anger and grief; he remains all his life "a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth." Not only this: the other members of society, those many-sided dwarfs, creatures of the general harmony, cry out after him, "The Prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad"; and they look with lofty contempt on his narrowness and extremeness. They do not see that they themselves and their own many-sided lives are but as the soil which depends for its fertility on these narrow-minded giants.

It is otherwise with the Priest. He appears on the scene at a time when Prophecy has already succeeded in hewing out a path for its Idea; when that idea has already had a certain effect on the trend of society, and has brought about a new harmony or balance between the different forces at work. The Priest also fosters the Idea, and desires to perpetuate it, but he is not of the race of giants. He has not the strength to fight con-

tinually against necessity and actuality; his tendency is rather to bow to the one and come to terms with the other. Instead of clinging to the narrowness of the Prophet, and demanding of reality what it cannot give, he broadens his outlook, and takes a wider view of the relation between his Idea and the facts of life. Not what ought to be, but what can be, is what he seeks. His watchword is not the Idea, the whole Idea, and nothing but the Idea; he accepts the complex "harmony" which has resulted from the conflict of that Idea with other forces. His battle is no longer a battle against actuality, but a battle in the name of actuality against its enemies. The Idea of the Priest is not, therefore, a primal force; it is an accidental complex of various forces, among which there is no essential connection. Their temporary union is due simply to the fact that they have happened to come into conflict in actual life, and have been compelled to compromise and join hands. The living, absolute Idea, which strove to make itself all-powerful and changed the external form of life while remaining itself unchanged -- this elemental Idea has died and passed away together with its Prophets. Nothing remains but its effects -- the superficial impress that it has been able to leave on the complex form of life. It is this form of life, already outworn, that the Priests strive to perpetuate, for the sake of the Prophetic impress that it bears.

Other nations have at various times had their Prophets, men whose life was the life of an embodied Idea; who had their effects, smaller or greater, on their people's history, and left the results of their work in charge of Priests till the end of time. But it is pre-eminently among the ancient Hebrews that Prophecy is found, not as an accidental or temporary phenomenon, but continuously through many generations. Prophecy is, as it were, the hall-mark of the Hebrew national spirit.

The fundamental idea of the Hebrew Prophets was the universal dominion of absolute justice. In Heaven it rules through the eternally Righteous, "who holds in His right hand the attribute of judgment," and righteously judges all His creatures; and on earth through man, on whom, created in G-d's image, lies the duty of cherishing the attribute of his Maker, and helping Him, to the best of his meagre power, to guide His world in the path of Righteousness. This Idea, with all its religious and moral corollaries, was the breath of life to the Hebrew Prophets. It was their all in all, beyond which there was nothing of any importance. Righteousness for them is beauty, it is goodness, wisdom, truth: without it all these are naught. When the Prophet saw injustice, either on the part of men or on the part of Providence, he did not inquire closely into its causes, nor bend the knee to necessity, and judge the evil-doers leniently; nor again did he give himself up to despair, or doubt the strength of Righteousness, or the possibility of its victory. He simply complained, pouring out his soul in words of fire; then went his way again, fighting for his ideal, and full of hope that in time --perhaps even "at the end of time" - Righteousness would be lord over all the earth. "Thou are Righteous, O L-rd," -- this the Prophet cannot doubt, although his eyes tell him that "the way of the wicked prospereth": he feels it as a moral necessity to set Righteousness on the throne, and this feeling is strong enough to conquer the evidence of his eyes. "But I will speak judgments with thee": this is the fearless challenge of Righteousness on earth to Righteousness in Heaven. These judg-

mens" relieve his pain; and he returns to his life's work, and lives on by the faith that is in him.

These Prophets of Righteousness transcended in spirit political and national boundaries, and preached the gospel of justice and charity for the whole human race. Yet they remained true to their people Israel; they, too, saw in it the chosen people; and from their words it might appear that Israel is their whole world. But their devotion to the universal ideal had its effect on their national feeling. Their nationalsim became a kind of corollary to their fundamental Idea. Firmly as they believed in the victory of absolute Righteousness, yet the fact that they turn their gaze time after time to "the end of days" proves that they knew -- as by a whisper from the "spirit of holiness" within them -- how great and how arduous was the work that mankind must do before that consummation could be reached. They knew, also, that such work as this could not be done by scattered individuals, approaching it sporadically, each man for himself, at different times and in different places; but that it needed a whole community, which should be continuously, throughout all generations, the standard-bearer of the force of Righteousness against all the other forces that rule the world: which should assume of its own freewill the yoke of eternal obedience to the absolute dominion of a single Idea, and for the sake of that Idea should wage incessant war against the way of the world. This task, grand and lofty, indeed, but not attractive or highly-esteemed, the Prophets, whose habit was to see their innermost desire as though it were already realized in the external world, saw placed on the shoulders of their own small nation, because they loved it so well. Their national ideal was not "a kingdom of Priests" but "would that all the people of the L-rd were Prophets." They wished the whole people to be a primal force, a force making for Righteousness, in the general life of humanity, just as they were themselves in its own particular national life.

But this double Prophetic idea, at once universal and national, was met in actual life, like every primal force, by other forces, which hindered its progress, and did not allow it free development. And in this case also the result of the conflict was to weld together the effects of all these forces into a new, complex organism; and so the idea of the Prophets produced the teaching of the Priets.

In the early stages, while Prophecy had not ceased altogether, the Prophets were accordingly more hostile to the Priests than to the general body of the people. The authors of the living Idea, which they had drawn from their innermost being, and by which they believed that they could conquer the whole world, they could not be content with seeing its image stamped, as it were, on the surface of an organism moulded out of many elements, and so fixed and sterotyped forever. Nay, more: in the very fact that their Idea had thus become a part of the social organism, they saw a kind of barrier between it and the people. But the opposition between the Prophets and the Priests died out gradually with the decay of Prophecy; and then the guidance of the people was left in the hands of the Priests (though they were not always called by that name), as sole heirs of the Prophetic Idea. The independence of this Idea, and the growth of its special influence, were at an end, because it had no longer a standard-bearer of its own.

When, therefore, the time came for this Idea -- that is to say, its universal element -- to cross the borders of Palestine, and become an active force throughout the world, the Priestly Judaism of those days was unable to guide it aright, and to preserve it in its pristine purity amid the host of different forces with which it came into conflict. Thus it was only for a moment that it remained a primal force; after that its influence became but as a single current, mingling and uniting with the myriad other currents in the great ocean of life. And since the number of alien influences at work was far greater here than it had been in the birthplace of the Idea, it followed that its visible effects were now even less than they had been before.

If, then, the Hebrew Prophets were to arise from their graves today and observe the results of their work through the length and breadth of the world, they would have small cause for satisfaction or paeans of triumph. Now after a long experience of thousands of years, they would recognize still more strongly the need of a "standard-bearer" to uphold their universal Idea; and for this reason they would be strengthened in their devotion to their national Idea. With even more fervor than before they would exclaim, "Would that all the people of the L-rd were Prophets."

We do, indeed, occasionally hear some such exclamation from the lips of Jewish scholars and preachers in Western Europe, who uphold the doctrine of the "mission of Israel." But it follows from what has been said that the Prophetic mission is distinguished from theirs in three essentials.

In the first place, the mission in the Prophetic sense is not the revelation of some new theoretical truth, and its promulgation throughout the world, until its universal acceptance brings about the fulfilment of the mission. The ideal of the Prophets is to influence practical life in the direction of absolute Righteousness -- an ideal for which there can never be a complete victory.

Secondly, this influence, being practical and not theoretical, demands, as a necessary condition of its possibility, not the complete dispersion of Israel among the nations, but, on the contrary, a union and concentration, at least partial, of all its forces, in the place where it will be possible for the nation to direct its life in accordance with its own character.

Thirdly, since this influence can never hope for a complete victory over the other influences at work on human society, which draw it in other directions, it follows that there can be no end either to the mission or to those to whom it is entrusted. The end can come, if at all, only when men cease to be men, and their life to be human life: in that great day of the Jewish dream, when "the righetous sit crowned in glory, and drink in the radiance of the Divine Prescence."

GORKY - From the "Old Tzergil".

Many thousands of years have passed since this took place. Far across the sea, in the place where the sun rises, is a land where a great river flows, and in that land every leaf and blade of grass casts a shadow large enough to protect a man from the sun, which pours down mercilessly there.

That is how generous the earth is in that land.

A tribe of powerful people once lived there; they tended their flocks and displayed great strength and courage in hunting wild animals, and they feasted when the hunt was over, singing songs and making merry with the maids.

One day, during such a feast, an eagle flew out of the sky and carried off a black haired maiden as lovely as the night. The arrows the men sent after the bird fell back on the ground without injuring it. And so the men set out in search of the maiden, but they could not find her. And in time she was forgotten, as everything on this earth is forgotten.

But in twenty years she herself came back, worn and wizened, and with her was a youth strong and handsome as she had been twenty years before. And when she was asked where she had been, she replied that the eagle had carried her off to the mountains and had lived with her there as his wife. This was their son. The eagle was no more; on feeling his strength ebbing he had soared high into the sky for the last time, and, folding his wings, had plunged to his death upon the jagged cliffs.

Everyone gazed in amazement at the son of the eagle, and they saw that he in no way differed from them except that his eyes had the cold proud gleam of the king of birds. When they addressed him, he sometimes did not deign to reply, and when the elders of the tribe approached him, he spoke to them as their equal. This they took as an insult, and they called him an unfeathered arrow with an unsharpened tip, and they told him that thousands like him and thousands twice his age paid them homage and obeyed their commands. But he looked them boldly in the eye and said that there were no other like himself; let others pay them homage if they wished, but he had no mind to. Oh, then the elders were angry indeed, and in their anger they said:

There can be no place for him among us. Let him go wherever he wishes.

He laughed and went where he wished: He went over to a fair maid who had been studying him intently, and he took her in his arms. And she was the daughter of one of the elders who had reproved him. And although he was very handsome, she thrust him away for she was afraid of her father. She fell down, he stamped upon her breast until the blood spurted out of her mouth as high as the sky, and the maiden gave a great sigh and writhed like a snake and died.

Those who saw this happen were speechless with fear; never before had they seen a woman killed so brutally. And for a long time they stood there in silence, looking at her where she lay with wide-open eyes and blood-stained mouth, and at him who was standing beside her, standing alone, apart from everyone else, very proud - he even held his head high as if he were calling down punishment upon it. When at last people recovered from their surprise, they seized him and bound him and left him there, finding that to kill him now would be too simple and would give them little satisfaction.

ONE CHRISTMAS EVE

Standing over the hot stove cooking supper, the colored maid, Arcie, was very tired. Between meals today, she had cleaned the whole house for the white family she worked for, getting ready for Christmas tomorrow. Now her back ached and her head felt faint from sheer fatigue. Well, she would be off in a little while if only the Missus and her children would come on home to dinner. They were out shopping for more things for the tree which stood all ready, tinseled and lovely in the living room, waiting for its candles to be lighted. Arcie wished she could afford a tree for Joe. He'd never had one yet, and it's nice to have such things when you're little. Joe was five, going on six. Arcie looking at the roast in the white folks oven wondered how much she could afford to spend tonight on toys. She only got seven dollars a week and four of that went for her room and the landlady's daily looking after Joe while Arcie was at work.

"L-rd, it's more'n a notion raisin a child" she thought. She looked at the clock on the kitchen table. After seven. What made white folks so darned inconsiderate? They know she wanted to get off before all the stores closed. She wouldn't have time to buy Joe nothin if they didn't hurry. And her landlady probably wanting to go out and shop, too, and not be bothered with little Joe.

"Dog gone it" Arcie said to herself. "If I just had my money, I might leave the supper on the stove for em. I just got to get to the stores fo they close. But she hadn't been paid for the week yet. The Missus had promised to pay her Christmas Eve, a day or so ahead of time.

Arcie heard a door slam and talking and laughter in the front of the house. She went in and saw the Missus and her kids shaking snow off their coats.

"Umm-mm! It's swell for Christmas Eve," one of the kids said to Arcie. It's snowin like the deuce, and Mother came near driving through a stop light. Can't hardly see for the snow. It's swell!

"Supper ready," Arcie said. She was thinking how her shoes weren't very good for walking in snow.

It seemed like the white folks took as long as they could to eat that evening. While Arcie was washing dishes, the Missus came out with her money.

"Arcie," the Missus said, "I'm sorry, but would you mind if I just gave you five dollars tonight? The children have made me run short of change, buying presents and all.

"I'd like to have seven," Arcie said, "I need it."

"Well, I just haven't got seven," the Missus said. "I didn't know you'd want all your money before the end of the week, anyhow. I just haven't got it to spare."

Arcie took five. Coming out of the hot kitchen, she wrapped up as well as she could and hurried by the house where she roomed to get little Joe. At least he could look at the Christmas trees in the windows downtown.

The landlady, a big light yellow women, was in a bad humor. She said to Arcie, "I thought you was comin home early and get this child. I guess you know I want to go out too, once in a while."

Arcie didn't say anything for, if she had, she knew the landlady would probably throw it up to her that she wasn't getting paid to looker after a child both night and day.

"Come on, Joe," Arcie said to her son, "Let's us go in the street."

"I hears they got a Santa Claus down town," Joe said, wriggling into his worn little coat. "I wants to see him."

"Don't know about that," his mother said, hurry up and get your rubbers on." Stores'll all be closed directly."

It was six or eight blocks downtown. They trudged along through the falling snow, both of them a little cold. But the snow was pretty.

The main street was hung with bright red and blue lights. In front of the City Hall there was a Christmas tree-but it didn't have no presents on it, only lights. In the store windows there were lots of toys-for sale. Joe kept on saying, "Mama, I want----"

But mama kept walking ahead. It was nearly ten, the stores were due to close, and Arcie wanted to get Joe some cheap gloves and something to keep him warm, as well as a toy or two. She thought she might come across a rummage sale where they had children's clothes. And in the ten-cent store, she could get some toys.

"O-OO! Lookee --," little Joe kept saying and pointing at things in the windows. How warm and pretty the lights were, and the shops, and the electric signs through the snow.

It took Arcie more than a dollar to get Joe's mittens and things he needed. In the A. & P. Arcie bought a big box of hard candies for 45¢. And then she guided Joe through the crowd on the street until they came to the dime store. Near the ten-cent store they passed a moving picture theatre. Joe said he wanted to go in and see the movies.

Arcie said, "Un-un! No, child! This ain't Baltimore where they have shows for colored, too. In these here small towns, they don't let colored folks in. We can't go in there."

"Oh," said little Joe.

In the ten-cent store, there was an awful crowd. Arcie told Joe to stand outside and wait for her. Keeping hold of him in the crowded store would be a job. Besides she didn't want him to see what toys she was buying. They were to be a surprise from Santa Clause tomorrow.

Little Joe stood outside the ten-cent store in the light and the snow, and the people passing. Gee, Christmas was pretty. All tinsel and stars and cotton. And Santa Clause a'coming from somewhere, dropping things in stockings. And all the people in the streets were carrying things, and the kids looked happy. But Joe soon got tired of just standing there and thinking and waiting in front of the ten-cent store. There were so many things to look at in the other windows. He moved along up the block a little, and then a little more, walking and looking. In fact, he moved until he came to the white folks' picture show. In the lobby of the moving picture show, behind the plate glass doors, it was all warm and glowing and awful pretty. Joe stood looking in, and as he looked his eyes began to make out, in there blazing beneath holly and colored streamers and the electric stars of the lobby, a marvelous Christmas tree. A group of children and grown-ups, white, of course,

were standing around a big jovial man in red beside the tree. Or was it a man? Little Joe's eyes opened wide. No, it was not a man at all. It was Santa Claus!

Little Joe pushed open one of the glass doors and ran into the lobby of the white moving picture show. Little Joe went right through the crowd and up to where he could get a good look at Santa Claus. And Santa Claus was giving away gifts, little presents for children, little boxes of animal crackers and stick-candy canes. And behind him on the tree was a big sign (which little Joe didn't know how to read). It said, to those who understood, MERRY XMAS FROM SANTA CLAUS TO OUR YOUNG PATRONS.

Around the lobby, other signs said, WHEN YOU COME OUT OF THE SHOW STOP WITH CHILDREN AND SEE OUR SANTA CLAUS. And another announced, GEM THEATRE MAKES ITS CUSTOMERS HAPPY SEE OUR SANTA.

And there was Santa Claus in a red suit and a white beard all sprinkled with tinsel snow. Around him were rattles and drums and rocking horses which he was not giving away. But the signs on them said (could little Joe have read) that they would be presented on the stage on Christmas Day to the holders of the lucky numbers. Tonight, Santa Claus was only giving away candy, and stick-candy canes, and animal crackers to the kids.

Joe would have liked terribly to have a stick-candy cane. He came a little closer to Santa Claus, until he was right in the front of the crowd. And then Santa Claus saw Joe, a Negro child. Santa Claus grinned. Everybody else grinned too, looking at little black Joe who had no business in the lobby of the white theatre. Then Santa Claus stopped down and slyly picked up one of his lucky number rattles, a big loud tin-pan rattle such as they use in cabarets. And he shook it fiercely right at Joe. That was funny. The white folks laughed, kids and all. But little Joe didn't laugh. He was scared. To the shaking of the rattle, he turned and fled out of the warm lobby of the theatre, out into the street where the snow was and the people.

Frightened by laughter, he had begun to cry. He went looking for his mama. In his heart he never thought Santa Claus shook great rattles at children like that and then laughed.

In the crowd on the street he went the wrong way. He couldn't find the ten-cent store or his mother. There were too many people, all white people, moving like the white shadows in the snow, a world of white people.

It seemed to Joe an awfully long time till he suddenly saw Arcie, dark and worried looking, cut across the sidewalk through the passing crowd and grab him. Although her arms were full of packages, she still managed with one free hand to shake him until his teeth rattled.

"Why didn't you stand where I left you?" Arcie demanded loudly. "Tired as I am I got to run all over the streets in the night lookin for you.

When little Joe got his breath back, on the way home, he told his mama he had been in the moving picture show.

"But Santa Claus didn't give me nothin," Joe said tearfully. "He made a big noise at me and I runned out."

"Serves you right," said Arcie, trudging through the snow. "You had no business in there. I told you to stay where I left you."

"But I seen Santa Claus in there," little Joe said, "so I went in."

"Huh! That wasn't no Santa Claus," Arcie explained. "If it was, he wouldn't a treated you like that. That's a theatre for white folks--I told you once--he's just a old white man."

"Oh--", said little Joe.

PERHAPS EVEN HIGHER

By Isaac Loeb Peretz

I

Where was the Rabbi of Nemirov early in the morning? How did he disappear? He was certainly not in the synagogue, nor in the Beth Hamidrash, nor in his own home. The door was always open in the Rabbi's house and one could enter freely. No fear that anybody would steal from the Rabbi of Nermirov, even if no one was at home.

But where was the Rabbi during the Selichot period, during the "days of awe," the Yamim Noraim; those days from Rosh Hashana (the New Year) to Tom HaKippur (The Day of Atonement)? All the Jews of Nemirov were to found at dawn in the synagogue reciting the Selichot prayers. Only the Rabbi was missing. Where could he be at such a solemn time when every Jew was making an accounting to God of his deeds for the past year?

The Jews of the town answered this question easily. Why? In heaven, of course! The Rabbi has so much work to do during these solemn days. He has to worry about provision for his people's needs for the coming year, their livelihood, peace, and health -- and fine wedding matches for their sons and daughters. No matter how good and pious Jews are, Satan with his thousand eyes, lies in wait for them, ready to slander and accuse. Who could help his people as well as the Rabbi?

The people of Nemirov knew where their Rabbi was. But the visitor who had come to the town from Lithuania, and was therefore called the Litvak, did not. You know how skeptical a Litvak is. He knows all the laws of the Talmud and Bible by heart, but legend does not interest him. This Litvak insisted that even Moses, our teacher, never reached heaven alive, but remained suspended thirty inches below it. He actually laughed at the idea of the Rabbi ascending to heaven. How could you argue with such a Litvak.

"Then where is the Rabbi, if not in heaven?" the people of Nemirov asked.

"I don't know and I don't care," the Litvak answered craftily. He had already decided to investigate and find out what the Rabbi really did during the Selichot prayers.

That very evening, immediately after prayers, the Litvak stole into the Rabbi's bedroom and hid under the bed. Another man might have dozed off, but not an obstinate Litvak. He kept awake by repeating whole tractates of the Talmud by heart.

The Rabbi did not sleep much either. The Litvak heard him sigh often. Anybody who had ever heard the Rabbi of Nemirov sigh, knew what depths of grief and agony over the sufferings of Israel, lay in each sigh. The heart of those who heard was rent by great sorrow. But not the Litvak. His heart was cast-iron. He listened and lay still. Both were lying still, the Rabbi on the bed, the Litvak under it.

II

Before dawn the Shammas, or care-taker of the synagogue, went around from house to house, rapping at the shutters and calling, "Awake for Selichot, fellow Jews! Come to Selichot prayers!"

The Litvak under the bed heard the noises of a house awakening -- beds creaking, people dressing, water being poured, a word of two of Yiddish, doors opening and closing, and then silence when all had left for the synagogue.

The Rabbi lay motionless in the silent house. Only a pale ray of moonlight penetrated the darkness through a chink in the shutters.

Terror seized the Litvak. He grew cold all over and the roots of his earlocks pricked his temples like needles. It was no joke to be left alone with the Rabbi of Nemirov at dawn during Selichot. But the Litvak was obstinate and determined. He trembled and waited.

At last the Rabbi moved. He got out of bed and did everything that befits a pious Jew on arising. Then he went to a wardrobe and took out a bundle of clothing -- but what clothing! A complete Russian peasant's dress -- a pair of linen breeches, high boots, a long smock, a big fur cap and a wide belt studded with brass nails. From the pocket of his coat the end of a heavy rope dangled.

From under a bed the Rabbi took an axe, stuck it into his belt and left the house. The Litvak followed, trembling even more than before.

A fearful stillness hung over the dark streets. Occasionally the groan of a sick person, or the sound of prayers in some place of worship, broke the silence. The Rabbi walked silently in the darkest shadows, close to the walls of the houses, with the Litvak behind him. To the Litvak it seemed that the beating of his own heart was as loud as the Rabbi's footsteps, but he continued after him.

They reached the outskirts of the town and the Rabbi, long may he live, entered a small wood. About thirty or forty paces inside he stopped in front of a young tree, drew his axe out of his belt and began chopping.

The Litvak looked in amazement as the Rabbi felled the tree, split it into logs, and the logs into kindling wood. These he bound with a cord, threw the bundle over his shoulder, replaced his axe in his belt and returned to town. In an alley in the slums of the town, the Rabbi stopped in front of a poor dilapidated house and rapped at the window.

A frightened voice from within answered, "Who's there?"

"I," said the Rabbi in a peasant dialect.

"Who are you?" the trembling voice asked again.

"Vassily," the Rabbi grunted in disguised tones.

"Which Vassily are you, and what do you want?"

"I have wood to sell," said the sham peasant, "very cheap, almost for nothing."

Without waiting for an answer, the Rabbi entered. The Litvak stealing in behind him, saw in the pale light of dawn, a miserable room with a few pieces of broken furniture. On the bed lay a sick old Jewess, covered with rags.

She asked the peasant bitterly, "You sell wood? With what shall I buy? Where can a poor sick Jewess, like myself, get money to buy wood?

"I'll give it to you on credit -- only six groschen."

The old woman groaned, "How will I ever pay back even six groschen?"

"Foolish woman," the Rabbi reproached her. "Look, you are only a poor sick Jewess but I am willing to trust you with the money for the wood, and I have faith that you will repay me. But you, you have a great and mighty God and you have no faith in him. Not even six groschen's worth of belief in His ability to help you."

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she sighed, "But who will light the stove? I haven't the strength to get up and there is nobody here."

"I will light it," the Rabbi said.

* * *

The Rabbi groaned as he put the wood in the stove, quietly reciting the first portion of the Selichot prayers.

Then when the wood began to crackle merrily in the flames, he repeated more cheerfully the second portion of the prayers.

He said the third portion when the fire was burning properly and he closed the doors of the stove...

* * *

The Litvak remained in Nemirov, and became a follower of the Rabbi. In years after, when people spoke of the Rabbi and said that every dawn during the Selichot period he ascended to heaven to plead for the Jews, the Litvak no longer was skeptical, not did he laugh. Under his breath he said:

"Yes, to heaven -- and perhaps even higher."

"I AM HUNGRY!"

My first recollection: I am hungry....

At that time we still lived in our own quarters on Garden Street near the station. Our rooms were on the eleventh floor, overlooking the railroad tracks, where the noise reached us day and night. How the whistles shrieked! Poor mother always had a wet compress to her head.

Then we did not fare so badly. Father was a messenger in a large clothing store. But even then, on many a day we had no food. Later Father lost his job.

One evening we all sat around the table and ate barley soup. Mother had borrowed the barley from her neighbor. My little sister, Henrietta, cried. She wanted mother to sweeten her soup, but the sugar bowl was empty...

Mother put away her work and I sat looking at her. "Aren't you hungry, my boy?" she asked quietly.

We never talked much. We were silent most of the time. It seemed as if there was no need for talking. We understood each other very well. She was the only person whom I love and could understand. But it is not enough to know one person thoroughly - especially a mother - in order to know everything, in order to understand everything, in order to know life and all its problems.

I was hungry and knew that there was no food in the house. Mother went through father's pockets as he was sitting sullenly at the side of the unlit stove. But his pockets were empty. And to go to the neighbor again, she didn't dare.

Suddenly, father rose. He picked me up in his arms.

"Where is my cap? Give it to me!" he said to mother. His voice was hoarse.

Mother became frightened and cried, "What do you want with the child? Where are you taking him?"

My heart throbbed.

"That is my business," I heard him say. "Is he not my child? Make way -"

Father carried me through the streets. We met many people on our way to the station. On seeing a policeman, father trembled and turned back to the post office.

Suddenly he let me down on my feet. I was confused.

He dragged me into an alley corner, and, towering over me, he stormed, "Here you shall stay! Don't move! Take off your cap, hold it like this - in front of you - and cry, cry without stopping -- 'Oh, I am hungry. Please, please, good lady, I am hungry.' And to a man you should say, 'Oh, good sir, please, please.' Do you understand? Beg, and you will get money. Stand here. I am leaving, and when I come back, I expect to find money."

Suddenly he kissed me and disappeared.

I stood, holding my cap in my outstretched hand. I looked around, bewildered and alone. The rain soon soaked through the light sweater I was wearing. On my feet were sandals, but no stockings. Terror seized me, like that which grips a drowning person. I held out my hand and cried pitifully.

"I am hungry...I am hungry..."

I was then only four years old.

HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

THREE GIFTS

by I. L. Peretz

Somewhere, many and many a year ago a Jew breathed his last. No one, of course, may live for ever. The man was dead; the attentions due the dead were paid, and a grave among the folk of his own faith lodged him. The grave closed over him, the orphaned son recited his kaddish and the soul flew upward-to Judgement.

On arriving there it found the scale of Justice already swinging in the court chamber. Here the good deeds and the evil were to be weighed. And forthwith the dead man's Advocate enters, the Good Spirit of his former life. A pure snow-white sack is in his hand and he stands near the right scale of the Balance. And behold, the dead man's Accuser enters, the Evil Spirit of his former life. An unclean sack is in his hands and he stands near the left scale of the Balance. The sack of pure white contains the good deeds. That sack that is begrimed and black, the evil, sinful deeds. And the vindicator of the soul pours out the contents of the white sack on the right scale. The good deeds are of the odor of incense and glow with the radiancy of the stars. The Accuser pours out the contents of the unclean sack on the left scale of the Balance. The evil deeds-Heaven protect us-are as black as coal, and reek of the very stench of tar and pitch.

And the poor soul stares at it all, and gasps. It never dreamt to behold such such a distinction between the "Good" and the "Evil." "There" it had often recognized neither of them and had mistaken the one for the other.

The scales rise gradually. Now the one, now the other moves up and down. . and the indicator oscillates now a hair's breadth to the left, now a trifle towards the right. But a hair's breadth variation and that gradually. . an ordinary mortal this soul must have been; neither rebellious to the Holy Spirit nor yet dwelling much within it. . capable of trivial virtues and trivial vices only. The scales held but little particles, tiny dots of things, at time hardly visible to the eye. And yet, what a clamor of joy and of gladness from the empyrean when the Balance indicator turns but a trifle towards the right and what racking cries of agony mark every turn to the left. And slowly, ever so slowly, the angels empty the sacks. With a zest they show up the tiny particles, just as decent burghers will add one more farthing to another in self-exhibition to a seeing world.

However, the deepest well will run dry, and the sacks, too, are soon empty. "Is that all?" inquires the court-usher. He, too, is an angel among his like. Both the Good and the Evil Spirits turn their sacks inside out. Absolutely nothing more. The court-usher steps forward to the Balance. He examines the indicator to see whether it its inclined towards the right of the left; and he stares at it good and long; for he beholds something that none ever saw since first the Heavens and the Earth knew creation. . .

"Why such hesitance?" demands the Chief Justice. And the usher mutters:

"But one moment! The index is exactly in the center. The Evil deeds and the Good are exactly of the same weight."

"Is that absolutely so?" queries a voice from about the table.

The usher looks yet again: "Yea, even to a hair's breadth."

The Heavenly Tribunal holds a consultation and the decision as to the sentence is thus pronounced: "Since the Evil deeds do not weigh more than the Good - the soul, of course, is free from Hell. But, on the other hand, since the Good deeds do not prevail over the Evil - neither can Paradise

receive her. Therefore she is to be neither here, nor there, but a wanderer between the realms of Heaven and Earth, until the Lord have mercy upon her and in His goodness call her unto Him."

And the usher of the court leads the soul away.

She sobs and bemoans her fate.

"Why art thou weeping?" he asks her. "'Tis true thou wilt not know the joy and the gladness of Eden, but neither will the agonies and pangs of Hell be thine."

But the soul, unconsoled, replies:

"The worst agony is preferable to nothing at all. Nothing is most dreadful. . ."

And the heavenly usher pities her and offers her some advice.

"Fly downward, little soul, and hover about the living world of men. Gaze not unto heaven. For what canst thou see on the other side, but the little stars. Radiant like people, they certainly are, but alas, very cold. They know no pity. They'll never speak to the Lord about you. Only the pious souls of Paradise will go to such trouble for a poor, exiled soul. . but they. . . hearken unto me. . they do love gifts, fair and beautiful gifts."

The usher talks bitterly. "Such are the ways of Paradise, nowadays. Fly downward, then, to the living world and watch life there and its course. And if thou only catchest a glimpse of something that is surpassingly fair or good, seize thou it, and fly up to Heaven. Present it as a gift to the pious there. Knock at the little window and in my name speak to the angel-guard. And when thou wilt have brought three gifts - why, then, you may be sure that the gates of Heaven will be unbarred. . they will manage to have it so for thee. . At the Throne of Honor, the well-born are not loved. . but the well-grown. ."

And, in this wise-way and with compassion, he thrust her out of Paradise.

THE FIRST GIFT

The poor little soul flies downward to the world of the living in search of gifts for the pious people of Heaven. It hovers about, everywhere; about the villages and the towns, about every habitation of man, amid the burning rays of hottest summer; amid the drops and water spears of rainy autumn; amid the silver web fantastical, in the last days of summer; amid the snowflakes that fall from above. . It gazes about and about till it well-nigh spends its sight.

Wherever and whenever it spies a Jew it runs hastily up to him and looks at him intently, perhaps he is on his way to Prayer, to bless the name of the Lord. Wherever a light breaks through the chink of a shutter, she is there, to peep inside, to see whether the Lord's fragrant flowerets, the secret deeds of good, blossom in that silent house. Alas! . . Most of the time it must dart away from the window in agony and dismay. . .

And thus season follows season, and year follows year. Oft, the soul becomes moody and sullen. Cities turn into graveyards, the graveyards into fields of pasture; forests are felled. The pebbles of the brook become sand; rivers have changed their courses; myriads of stars have fallen and myriads of souls have flown upward; but the gracious Lord has never thought of her; neither has she found aught that was beautiful or good.

And she thinks within herself; "How poor the whole world is. Its people how mediocre; their souls, how dark and obscure. . How can aught good be found here? Alas! I must rove about, an exile forever." But suddenly a red flame bursts before her. Out of the dark and gloomy night a red flame

leaps forth. She stares about her. .'Tis from an upper window of a house that the flame has shot forth. Robbers are attacking a wealthy man. Masks are on their faces. One holds a burning torch in his hands; another holds a blazing knife at the man's breast and repeats his threat again and again:

"Jew, make but the slightest motion and you are dead. The knife will most assuredly pass through you back, then." The others are all busy, opening chests and drawers. The man looks serenely about him, although the knife is at his breast. The brows above his lucid eyes do not quiver. Not a hair of that gray beard that reaches to the waist moves. All of it seems to be something that is not his concern. "The Lord hath given, the Lord taketh away." he muses, and his pale lips mutter: "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

"One is not born thus and one may not carry it all to his grave." He views them calmly when they are about to clear the last drawer of the last bureau and watches, in absolute silence, the pillage of the gold and the silver, the jewelry and other precious things!

Perhaps he is renouncing it all!

But all at once, as the robbers are about to lay hold upon the last hidden treasure, a little sack, hidden in the most secret nook of all, he forgets himself, trembles all over, his eyes are bloodshot, and he stretches his right hand forward, to the weapon. He would, as it seems, cry out!

"Touch it not!"

But the cry is unuttered. A red, vaporous stream of blood shoots forth, the knife has done its work. . It is the heart's blood that sprinkles the little sack. He falls to the ground. The robbers tear the little sack open in a hurry. That will be the best, the most precious gain of all!

But what a grievous error! The blood had been shed in vain, neither silver nor gold, nor jewels were there. Naught of any value in this world. It is a little measure of sand from the Holy Land, to be strewn on his face at burial. That, the wealthy man had wished to save from the hands of strangers. That had shed his blood. .and the soul seizes a blood-soiled particle of the sand and knocks at the little window of Heaven. Her first gift found ready acceptance.

THE SECOND GIFT

"Remember now," said the angel as he barred the window. "Remember, two more offerings." "The Lord will aid me" thinks the soul, grown hopeful; and joyously flies down again. However, her gladness lasts but a little while. Again, years follow years and she can find nothing that is surpassingly beautiful. And her melancholy returns to her. "The world has, it seems forsaken the way of the Lord, and like a spring ever runs out and out. The more the water that flows into the soil, the more sucked in, the more the soil becomes foul and unclean. Fewer are the gifts for heaven then. Men become ever petty and more petty. Their good deeds grow tiny! Their evil deeds blacker and blacker dust - their deeds are hardly visible to the eye! . ."

And thus speaking to herself she seems to think that should the Lord command all the evil deeds and the good of the world to be weighed in the Balance, that the needle would hardly move, yea, not even tremble. The earth can hardly rise or fall now, she is but a wanderer from the empyrean above to the black abyss of Sheol below. A splendid cause for an eternal disputation between the spirits of good and of evil; just such a one as the eternal disputation between the spirits of good and of evil; just such

a one as the eternal dispute between darkness and light, heat and cold, life and death. . .

The earth rocks to and fro. She can neither ascend nor descend. Thus we ever have weddings and divorces, parties and funerals, love and hate, ever, forever. Suddenly the blare of trumpets and of horns resounds. The soul looks down, and beholds an ancient German town. All sorts of roofs, narrow and bent, surround the courthouse. A motley crowd fills the place. People peer out of the windows; others throng the roofs, and some sit astride the beams of the edge, where they are propped up by the wall.

A table covered with a green cloth stands at the head of the courthall. The cloth has golden tassels and fringes. The men of the court are holding golden books. They wear sable caps and large feathers stick from the shining buttons to which they are sewed. At the head of the table, the President of the court is seated. An Eagle hovers overhead. . .

A young Jewess, all bound, stands on one side. Ten slaves hold a white horse firmly near her. The President has risen and with his eyes towards the market-place he reads the paper he has in his hand, her sentence.

"This Jewess," he says "is guilty of a montrous sin. Even the Lord, in his graciousness and great mercy, could not forgive her that. . .

"On our last and most sacred holiday, she slunk out of her ghetto and walked through the clean streets of our town. . .

"She has sullied the Holy procession. Her eyes have defiled the sacred images that we bore with hymnal song and music through the streets. .

"The hymns of our innocent children, or our young, clad in snow-white garments, her ears have sucked in, and the beating of the holy drum likewise. . . who knows whether the devil, the foul fiend, has not transformed himself into this image of the Jewess, of this cursed Rabbi's daughter? Who knows whether thus, he has not touched or polluted a holy treasure of ours?

"What was the fiend up to, in this fair disguise? We need not equivocate. Undoubtedly, she is fair; a devilish beauty is hers. Do but look at the wicked sparkle of her eyes, and the modest and humble pose of her silken eyelashes. . .

"See you her alabaster face? It has indeed grown paler since her imprisonment, but duller not a whit! Look at her fingers. How thin and long and how transparent they seem in the sunlight! . . .

"What could the fiend have wanted but to dissuade a soul from its Holy faith, and that he has done indeed."

"What a beautiful maiden!" exclaims one of our own Knighthood, a member of one of our best families. . .

"It was more than patience could endure. The crowd noticed her and laid hands upon her. The fiend did not even stir for defense. How could she? They were all pure of sin. They had been absolved. He had no power over them.

"Let this then be the sentence of the devil, of the fiend disguised in this form of a Jewish maiden:

"Bind her hair, her fiendishly long hair, to the tail of this savage horse. . .

"Let the horse fly over the streets and drag her like a corpse across the very streets she has polluted in defiance of our sacred laws. .

"May her blood besprinkle them and wash those that her feet have besmirched!

Savage cries of joy fill the market-place and when the great din is over.

over the convicted woman is asked her last wish.

She answers calmly: "I have but one wish. Give me but a few pins."

"Her grief has made her mad!" think the men of the court.

"Not so," she answers serenely and frigidly: "This is my last wish; my last desire."

They gratify her in that.

"Now bind her!" commands the President of the court.

The hands of the servants tremble as they bind her long dark braids to the tail of the horse, which is so wild that he can hardly be controlled. . .

"Make room!" the command is heard. There is a wild rush forward. The crowd huddles close to the walls of the buildings. All raise their hands. All are ready to goad the horse along. Some have whips, some have cords, others wiretips. Their breath is tifled for the moment; their faces are aflame, their eyes sparkle and in all this hubbub no one notices how the convicted maiden bends down and pins her skirts at the seam and pushes the pins deep into her body, so that it may be wholly covered when she is dragged about the streets. Only the exiled soul notices it all. . .

"Free the horse," the command is heard again. The slaves have leaped away. The horse bounds forward. A deafening shout fills the air. Whips and cords and wires are whirled about and whistle loudly. The horse, wild with terror rushes across the market place, across the streets, over the alley and far, far out of the town. . .

The vagrant soul has drawn a blood-stained pin out of the victim's body and is on her way to Heaven with it! And the angel at the little window soothes her, saying, "But one more gift!"

THE THIRD GIFT

And downward again the soul wends her way. But one more gift! And as before, year follows year and melancholy has its grip upon her. The world has grown little indeed. Men are becoming ever more insignificant. Their deeds too are tiny and more so; the good and the evil alike. . .

And a new though occurs to her:

"What if the Lord, Blessed be His name, were to halt the world process this very moment and announce the final Judgement; would not then the Advocate appear on the right side of the Balance and pour out the contents of his white sack, its tiny particles and little grains of sand; would not the Accuser follow and empty his sack on the left scale, his little wee bits and fragments? What a long process that would be! What a multitude of little things!

"And when the emptying of the sack is completed, what then? Of course, the indicator would be pointing right to the center!

"Such insignificant things weigh nothing; no matter what their number. Indeed, what can be the weight of a tiny thread, of a straw or of an empty husk?

"What might the decision of the Lord be then?

"Would he turn the whole into a void again? Certainly not; for the Evil deeds do not weigh more than the Good.

"Perhaps he might grant salvation to all. But that, too, is unlikely for the deeds of Good do not prevail over those of Evil.

"It is hard to see what would follow then.

"Might he not say: "Pass ye along. Rove ye from the realms of Hell to Heaven amid Love and Hate, in tears of mercy or vaporous blood. . . from

cradle unto grave, rove ye farther , even farther.'"

However, Destiny seems to have planned the deliverance of the soul from her gloomy reflections. The din of beating drums arouses her...

"Where am I now, and what's the time?" She cannot recognize the place. She has no idea of the time.

She beholds the courtyard of a prison. The rays of the sun hover about the little windows and even penetrate the iron bars... The glide along the wall and fall upon a heap of sundry weapons supported there. The soldier-guards have but a moment ago received their whips...

Two long rows of soldiers and a narrow passage between.

Who is it that must run the gauntlet here? Oh, it is but an insignificant Jew. A torn shirt is on his emaciated body and a skull-cap on his half-shaven head. There he is being led forth.

But what is his crime? What has he stolen? Has he robbed anyone, murdered? Perhaps it is but a false accusation. Is that not an ancient custom and were there not many such before?

The soldiers smile as they ponder: What was the use of having all of us here? would not half the number have sufficed!

He is thrust into the passage. He steps forward. He walks directly on. The lashes fall upon him. But he curses no one, neither does he falter or fall...

A fit of rage overwhelms the soldiers. He walks on and on!

The whips whistle in the air, fiendishly. They grip and coil around the body as serpents do. The blood of the emaciated frame gushes forth and does not cease!

Whoop-whack! Whoop-whack! Suddenly a whip falling high throws the skull-cap down to the ground. The doomed man notices it after a few steps...He stirs and reflects. He turns round again and walks onward serenly calm though covered with streaming blood. The skull-cap is on his head. He walks on till he falls...And when he falls thus , the Soul runs swiftly up to him, and seizes the cap that has cost so many innocent lashes, and with it she flies upward to the little window of heaven.

And the third gift also finds acceptance! The pious Souls try their best and spare no trouble; the doors of Eden are now open! And the voice of the "Oracle" is heard:

"These are truly beautiful gifts, of surpassing fairness...They may be of no practical use. They may not even serve for show...But they are **marvelous.**

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OUR HISTORICAL HERITAGE

by Berl Katznelson

Creative revolutionaries do not throw the cultural heritage of ages into the dust-bin. They examine and scrutinize, accept and reject. At times they may add to an accepted tradition. At times they descend into ruined grottos, excavate, remove the dust from that which had lain in forgetfulness, resuscitate old traditions which may stimulate the new generations. Is it revolutionary to look down upon an old and profound national tradition which can educate man and train him for his future tasks?

We must determine the values of the present and of the past with our own eyes and examine them from the viewpoint of our vital needs, from the viewpoint of progress toward our future.

From fathers to sons, throughout all the generations the exodus from Egypt is related as a personal reminiscence thereby retaining its original lustre. "In every generation must every man regard himself as if he personally were redeemed from Egypt." This is the peak of historic consciousness and history has no example of a greater fusion of individual with group than this ancient pedagogic command...And I do not know of any other ancient memory so entirely a symbol of our present and future, as the "memory of the exodus from Egypt."

Very numerous are the nations who were enslaved and many are there who have been exiled...Israel knew how to preserve the date of its mourning, of its loss of freedom, from oblivion. On this day, each generation and each person in Israel saw his own world as lying in ruins...Our national memory with these simple means overcast each soul in Israel with heavy mourning over the entire world at the same day and the same hour. Each organ yet unsevered in the nation's body wrapped itself in gloom, immersed itself in sorrow, folded within its heart the feeling of ruin, bondage, exile. Each creating generation added something of its own to this feeling of ruin, from the mournal chants of Jeremiah, to those of Spain and Germany, to the "Scroll of Fire" of Bialik.

The fitting forms will grow from a living feeling within the heart, and an upright independent spirit...Though our achievements in this country multiply rapidly, and even after we shall have attained a life without shame, we shall not say "we are redeemed", till our exile has ended. As long as Israel is dispersed and is prey to decrees and to hatred, to contempt and to forced conversion, I shall never forget, I shall never be able to forget the most fearful day in our destiny — the day of our destruction.

MIRACLES ON THE SEA

by Y.L. Peretz

In Holland, in a half-sunken cabin at the edge of the sea, dwelt a silent soul-a Jewish fisherman named Sati, perhaps after a great-grandfather Saadia. But the fisherman didn't know of Saadia. As a matter of fact, he knew very little of Jewishness. Descended from generations of fishermen, he had spent his days and years on the sea. As his was the only Jewish family in a non-Jewish village how should he know much about his own people? His job was to catch fish; his wife's to make and mend nets and to keep house. His children rolled in the sand and looked for amber...Why, if Sati should be caught in a storm on the sea and his life were in danger, neither he nor his family could as much as pray the simplest Jewish prayer: Shma Yisroel. Sati on the high sea would merely gaze mutely towards heaven; his wife would beat her hands against her head or else direct an angry look at the dark and angry sky; his children would hurl themselves on the sand and cry out together with other children: Sancta Maria, Sancta Maria!

How should Sati's children know any better? It was too far to walk to the nearest Jewish community and the poor family, with barely enough for food, could not afford to ride. Besides, the sea didn't let a person get away so easily. Sati's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had perished in it, yet such was its fascination that, though it often proved to be man's dangerous and most treacherous foe, one loved it and was drawn to it by an irresistible force...Since escape from its lure was impossible, it seemed best to live on it and to perish in it.

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A single Jewish custom was still retained by this family - Yom Kippur.

Early on the day before Yom Kipour, Sati and his family selected the biggest fish and made their way to town. There they handed over the fish to the community shochet or ritual slaughterer, where they stayed over night and ate at the end of the fast.

Throughout the day they sat in the Dutch Temple; they listened to the singing of the choir, the playing of the organ, the chanting and praying of the cantor. None of them understood a single word of the ritual, but they looked upon the holy ark and upon the preacher in the golden yarmulke or barret. Whenever the golden yarmulke arose they stood up, and whenever the golden yarmulke sat down they settled back in their seats. If at times Sati's tired and drowsy eyes closed, a neighbor's elbows would nudge him to stand up.

This was what Yom Kippur meant to him. He was completely ignorant of its significance as Judgement Day, when even the fish tremble in the water, and entirely unaware of all that went on in heaven. He merely followed a well-established family custom to listen on Yom Kippur to choir and organ without eating all day and to go to have supper at the shochet's house after Nehilla (this very word for the late afternoon prayer was even unknown to him). Perhaps the sochet himself didn't know much more. -- A shochet in Holland!

After the black coffee, Satya, his wife, and his children would get up, say good-by to the shochet and his family, wish them a happy year, and walk the entire night back toward the sea - "sea" and not "home" was the customary expression.

To stay on any longer was out of question.

"Why, you haven't even seen the town!" the shochet and his wife would argue.

But Sati merely repeated contemptuously: "The town, hm!"

Sati was no good at speech-making. The sea teaches silence. He really did hate the town, its narrow streets shut off from air and sky, a slit between one roof and another. On the sea, however, what expanse and what air!

"The sea is your foe, your death," he was told.

"A good death," he replied.

He wanted to die as his father and grandfather before him, to be swallowed up by the sea in the prime of health, to be spared the torture of sickness, the pining away on a bed year after year, the lamentations about him, and finally burial in the hard earth...Brr!

A chill went through him at the mere thought of such a death.

When the family walked home, toward the sea, through the night, dawn would begin to break and they would catch sight of the golden reflection of the sand-dunes and further on the sparkling mirror of the water. Then they would clap their hands in joy.

They were as happy as a bridegroom with his bride.

This went on year after year.

Fishermen came and went, one shochet was replaced by another, but the custom remained unaltered.

The custom required fasting, choir organ, a big fish for supper after Nehilla at the shochet's house, leavetaking, and mutual goodwishes.

This custom was the only thread linking Sati to the Jewish people.

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It came to pass one morning: the sun was reddening the east; the sea, awakening from slumber, breathed almost inaudibly, exhaling lazily and inhaling dreamily; somewhere in the azure, white wings fluttered and cried...then again quiet...here and there quiet irridescences flitted over the sea, golden spots skimmed across the yellow sand, the cabins of the fishermen were shut all along the coast. Only a single door was open - Sati was going out

It was the day before Yom Kippur. Sati's face was quiet and earnest. His eyes sparkled with delight. He was out to perform a good deed, to catch a fish for Yom Kippur.

He walked up to the little boat and lifted the chain which kept it moored. The chain clattered and voices became audible to the right and to the left:

"Don't! Don't!"

His neighbors were calling to him. Their heads peered through the little windows.

Far and wide the sea lay calm and smooth, blending with the happy, laughing morning sky. The water barely breathedand hardly wrinkled the shore. Between the wrinkles rippling smiles danced and shone as on the wrinkled face of a kind grandmother. The sea murmured something or other, perhaps it was telling a grandmother's tale to the scattered slender water-plants and to the moss-covered bits of rock which it seemed to caress smilingly, playfully.

But the fishermen knew their sea too well and they did not trust it.

"Don't! Don't!"

The sea will rock and cradle; the bright mirror-like surface will break; playfulness will turn to grimness; the quiet to a roaring howling, deafening commotion; the ripoling furrows to billowing waves capable of swallowing barks and boats with as much ease as the Leviathan swallows little fish.

"Don't! Don't!"

An old man, barefooted and bareheaded, with fluttering gray hair came out of a cabin. His face was deeply lined like the sea but without the sea's false smile. He went up and put his hand on Sati's shoulder:

"Look!"

He pointed to a little dark dot on the horizon, a dot visible only to a fisherman's eye.

"A cloud is forming!"

"I'll be back home before that," answered Sati, "it's just one fish I want to catch."

The old man's face grew more serious:

"You have a wife and children, Sati!"

"And a G-d in heaven," answered Sati confidently. He is out in the service of G-d. He pushes the boat from its mooring and jumps into it.

Over the sea it bounded, as light as a feather, and the sea cradled

it, humming to it sweetly and charmingly, caressing it with beautiful entwining pearls. The old fisherman stood on the shore and murmured:

"Sancta Maria! Sancta Maria!"

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Sati's boat flew lightly over the sea and Sati threw his net so skilfully. The net became heavier and heavier. He could barely pull it in with all his strength and he found in it water-plants, sea-weed, but not a single fish.

The old fisherman on the shore had lost the boat from view. For the third and fourth time Sati threw his net and pulled it in again with tremendous exertion. All sorts of water-plants were in the catch but not a single fish.

The sea began to rock and to cradle ever more severely. The sun was already high in the sky but its radiance was covered with mist - a weeping sun. The dark dot on thehorizon had meanwhile drawn up behind the orb like a brown snake, growing ever darker and darker and creeping ever closer to the sun.

Half the day was gone and Sati stillfloated on and on, trying his luck again and again.

The thought came to him: "G-d doesn't want me to fulfill his commandment this year. I must go back!" His heart was sad: he must have sinned against G-d in some way and so G-d was unwilling to let him bring the customary offering. He grasped the rudder firmly in his hands and was about to turn the boat around toward the shore. In the very same second he felt a splash on his face. Looking about, he saw a large golden fish jumping and disporting in the sea, lashing the water with its tail.

Ah! this fish must be caught! This fish must have been sent by G-d who was aware of the fisherman's disappointment, of his yearning to fulfill the divine commandment. Again he headed the boat out to sea and gave chase to the fish.

The sea was rising in fury. The waves towered ever taller and taller. The sun was already half-covered by a cloud, from behind which clusters of white rays borke through obliquely. The fish swam over the shoulders of the waves and Sati's boat followed after it in hot pursuit...Suddenly the fish was lost to sight. Between it and Sati's boat rose up a wall, blown skyward by the wind.

"It is fooling me, it is dazzling my eyes!" thought Sati and was about to turn his boat back to shore. In the same second the wave flattened out, as though it had never been the fish swam almost up to the boat and looked at him with big eyes, as though begging him: "Take me, please take me, fulfill the divine commandment, perform with me a deed of righteousness."

Hardly does Sati turn seaward again-when again the fish is lost! A new billow arises between the fish and the boat. The sea resumes its angry mood. It no longer sings a charming melody. It now unlashes its full rage. To swim on its back, to step on its waves is indeed most dangerous. It seems even to terrify the sun, which is

now completely hidden behind clouds. The wind, that must have been waiting for this moment, now lashes out in complete abandonment, with all its angry strength, beating the sea, chastising it as with rods, infuriating it ever more and more. The sea snarls and thunders, as though a thousand bass-viols are playing in its entrails and a thousand kettle drums in its waves.

"Home! Home!" beats Sati's heart. He gathers up his nets into the boat, grasps the oars with all his might, and works away with every bit of strength. The veins in his hands are near to bursting. The boat is hurled up and down the waves like a hollow nutshell. The sky is black and shattered sea an angry brown. And still, Sati struggles to reach home, home....

Suddenly, he sees something swimming towards him from one side - a human body is swimming, a drowning person, a woman, her hair floats before her, black hair, his wife has such hair, beneath the hair white hands are visible, his wife has such hands...a voice is calling: "help! help!" -- his wife's voice...the mother of his children...she must have followed him on another boat... she is drowning, she is calling for his help.

He turns the boat to the right and wants to get to the body - the sea opposes, waves arise to interfere, the storm tears and howls, and through the storm he can hear her voice: "Help, help, Sati, help!"

He puts forth his last ounce of strength to get to her, he is nearing the white spot, he can no longer see her hair but merely the swimming and sinking dress...his oar can almost reach her...but between him and his wife a wall of water arises and hurls her to one side and him to the other.

"A mirage!" thinks Sati and he recalls that he had the same experience with the golden fish. Involuntarily he casts an eye toward the coast. He notices that in the fishermen's cabins the windows are already lit up.

"Yom Kippur!" flashes through his mind and he lets go the oars. "Heaven! he exclaims looking upward. "Do with me whatever you will, on Yom Kippur I will not row!"

The wind rages on and the waves hurl the boat up and down. Sati, from the moment he let the oars drop him his hands, sits calm and peaceful, looking with open eyes now up to the bolted heavens and now down to the boiling, foaming sea.

"Do with me, G-d, as you will. May your will prevail!"

Suddenly he recalls a melody of the choir and organ and he begins to intone this melody. His silent soul had only one language with which to speak to G-d - the language of song. The sky becomes blacker and blacker, the waves higher and higher, the wind more piercing than ever...The boat is hurled up a mountain and down a mountain, from one wave onto another, now a wave tears him from the rudder and now a second wave comes up from behind and opens its jaws to swallow the frail bark...The wind tears like thousands of ravenous wolves--and in the midst of all this commotion, Sati sings the melody of Mi Yonuab Umi Yonua." He sings like the choir assisted by the organ....

A wave crashes into the boat. Sati wants to die singing. The boat capsizes...but Sati is not yet destined to die.

Two white figures, as though woven of white mist, walk barefoot over the sea, holding each other by the hand, their eyes aglow, their hair unfurled behind them, and as Sati overturns with his boat, they stoop down to him, pick him up, take him between them, put their arms around him, step with him over the waves as over hills and dales, and lead him thus arm-in-arm through storm and tumult. He looks up and wants to speak, to ask something, but they tell him:

"Sing, Sati, you had better sing! Your song will overcome the rage of the sea...."

They walk with him and Sati hears his boat following him. He turns around. There is his boat with the net and entangled in the net is the golden fish.....

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When they brought him to shore and he made his way home, he found two guests. the shochet and the shochet's wife.

A fire had broken out in the town and so they came to spend the holiday with him.

The fish was killed -- and the custom remained unaltered on this Yom Kippur as on all others.

EXERPTS FROM THE ADDRESS TO THE ANGLO AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY 1946

by David Ben Gurion

That is one reason why we want to get back here, and there is a second. It is love of Zion, a deep love, passionate and undying. It is unique, but a fact; you will see it here. There are 600,000 of us here because of it.

In evidence given to you in America, an American Arab, I believe it was John Hassan, said no Palestine was ever known as a political and geographical entity; and another American Arab, a great Arab historian, Dr. Hitti, went even further and said, and I am quoting him: "There is no such thing as Palestine in history, absolutely not." And I agree with him entirely; but when he speaks of history he means Arab history, he is a specialist in that and knows his business. In A rab history there is indeed no such thing as Palestine. Arab history was made in Arabia, Syria and Persia, in Spain and North Africa. You will not find Palestine in it. There is, however, something more than Arab history; there is world history and in that history there is a country named Judea, or as we call it Eretz Israel, the Land of Israel. We have called it Israel since the days of Joshua. There was such a country in history, there was indeed, and it is still there. It is a little country, a very little one, but it made a very deep impression on world history -- and on ours, because it made us a people: and our people made it. No other people in the world made it; it made no other people. It entered world history by way of many wars, of Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines. It gained a place in world history, because in it our people created perhaps a limited, but a very great civilization, and here the Jews were shaped to be as they have been until this day: a very exclusive people on one hand and on the other a people universal; very national and very international. Exclusive in their internal life and attachment to their history, to their national and religious tradition; universal in their religious, social and ethical ideas. We were told that there is one G-d in the entire world, that there is unity of the human race because every human being was created in the image of G-d, that there ought to be and there will be brotherhood and social justice on earth, peace between peoples. Those were our ideas; this was our culture and this made history here. Here we created a Book, many books. Some were lost, some survived only in translations, but twenty-four remain in their original language -- Hebrew, the language, Mr. Chairman, in which I am thinking now as I talk to you in English, and which the Jews in this country are speaking now. We went into exile, but we took that Book with us, and in that Book--which was more to us than a Book, it was our very selves--we took with us our country in our hearts and in our souls. These three, the Land, the Book and the People, are for us forever one. It is an indissoluble bond. There is no material power which can undo it, only our physical destruction can.

The distinguished British Chairman quoted a book by Sir Ronald Storrs and from another writing. Sir, our rights and our attachment and our significance in this country you will find in the Book of which I speak, in that Book alone. That, and that alone, is binding upon us. Whether or not it is binding on anyone else is not for me to say. I know many Christians who believe it binding upon them too. You cannot contemplate our people without it, not in the far away past nor in the present, nor, in my conviction, in the future either.

Somebody may tell you: "All this is merely a mystical attachment to a mystical Zion, not to this physical Zion." But now you will see 600,000 living human beings whom the love of Zion has brought here and kept here. They are attached to the living Zion, although it has for them a profound spiritual significance as well.

Then we are asked what seems a very common-place question: "When the Arabs conquered Spain, did they not create a magnificent civilization there?" Yes, they did. They created it and then were driven out. Can they claim Spain for the Arabs? Have they a right to Spain? I know of no retort which proves our case so forcibly as this, and I take it up. Is there a single Arab in the entire world who dreams about Spain? Is there an Arab in Iraq or in Egypt or anywhere who knows the rivers and mountains of Spain more than he knows his present country? Is there an Arab in the world who will give his money to Spain? What is Spain to him?

There are many who want to conquer countries and possess them. But I am speaking about love of country. Is there a single Arab in the world who loves Spain?

Here are Jews who have been parted for centuries, some of them for many centuries, some of them for thousands of years like the Jews in Yemen, yet they have always carried Zion in their hearts, and finally came back, and came back with love. Where in the world will you find people loving their country as the Jews love Zion?

I wonder whether all the American members of the Commission know this: in the first World War thousands of Jewish boys from the United States of America, myself fortuitously among them, came over to fight for the liberation of this country in a Jewish Legion in the British Army, in the Royal Fusiliers, under Allenby.

I know what happened then in Palestine, but not what happened in Egypt. There were Semitic soldiers in this country, many thousands. Some of them fought on the other side, and I do not blame them. It was their right and perhaps their duty.

What brought over these thousands of American Jewish boys with the consent and blessing of President Wilson? What else but the love of Zion? Perhaps it can hardly be explained, but there it is.

You have heard how Jews strove to settle on the land in many other countries. It was tried in Russia by Czar Alexander Nicolas I. The Soviet Government tried it. It was tried in Argentina; and in the United States. It failed everywhere. It succeeded here. Elsewhere there was no love of the land; there was that love here. As much as I love this country, I must confess that Argentina is much richer and more fertile. America certainly is, and Russia too, yet there the Jews failed, and here they succeeded. And the answer? love of Zion?

Why? What is it? A man chan change many things, even his religion, his wife, his name. But there is one thing he cannot change-his father and mother. There is no way of changing them. The father and mother of our people are this country. Once more a thing unique, but it is so.

More than three hundred years ago the ship "Mayflower" left Plymouth for the

New World. It was a great event in American and English history. I wonder how many Englishmen or how many Americans know exactly the date on which that ship left Plymouth, how many people were on board, and what was the kind of bread that they ate when they sailed.

Well, more than 3,300 years ago the Jews left Egypt. More than 3,300 years ago, yet every Jew in the world still knows the date exactly. It was on the 15th of Nisan. The bread they ate was matzot. And still today all Jews throughout the world on that same 15th day of Nisan eat the same matzot, in America, in Russia, and tell the story of Egyptian bondage and recount all that befell, all the sufferings of the Jews, since they went into exile. They end the recital with these two sentences: "This year we are slaves; next year we will be free. This year we are here; next year we will be in Zion, the Land of Israel." Jews are like that.

EXALTED AND HALLOWED

by Sholem Asch

When the Gestapo in Praga, a suburb of Warsaw, brought Itzig-Meyer to the center where Jews were being rounded up for forced labor, this son of Israel created something of a sensation. One might even venture to say that the Gestapo men, who happened to be present in the large courtyard, surveyed Itzig-Meyer with a feeling akin to pleasure. The troopleader himself, a young man in his twenties, with a black mustache and small hard eyes, came out of his office to greet him. In all the time that the Gestapo had used the brick building of a former schoolhouse, set in the middle of a large yard, as a center for Jews, they had examined various representatives of the race. All sorts of Jews, dragged out of houses or caught on the streets, had been brought before them. They had seen smooth-shaven Jews in European clothes who had pretended to be "Aryans", as well as genuine Jews with full-grown beards and in the traditional long robes. But as yet they had not beheld so authentic a specimen of the tribe. Itzig-Meyer's Jewishness shrieked from him. His long luxuriant beard practically radiated "Jewishness". Long black ear-locks hung down his heavily bearded cheeks; his eyes, large and restless, were dark and shining. He wore a torn old satin coat, pulled together by a belt; best of all, under the folds of his long robe one could see his feet in the white socks worn by orthodox Jews. The men of the Gestapo stood around him, crowing. Even the troop-leader, his hands in his trouser pockets, surveyed Itzig-Meyer with a faint satisfied smile on his generally stern face. All looked gleefully at the victim before them.

"What is your name, Jew?" one of them asked.

"Itzig-Meyer Rosenkranz."

"Itzig-Meyer Rosenkranz? There's a name for you! With Rosenkranz, to boot!" The Gestapo men laughed.

"What is your occupation, Jew?"

"Rabbi."

"A rabbi! A fine occupation! And who are you?"

Itzig-Meyer had made his peace with the world as soon as the Gestapo had caught him, and was prepared for anything. He felt calm and gave no outward sign of nervousness. Even his quick shining eyes looked steadfastly at his examiners. He was puzzled by the question but he answered, "A Jew, naturally."

"A Jew, naturally! This is magnificent!" The men of the Gestapo laughed again.

Only the troop-leader stopped smiling. He grew serious. He wanted to put a finish to the comedy, but the Jew was so choice, so rare a find, that he could not help glancing at him once more. He looked at him carefully, piercingly, as a cat might look at a mouse which it holds caught in its claws.

However, the terror in the eyes of the mouse was absent. The Jew showed no fear; his eyes did not flinch; his tall figure did not cower; his lips did not tremble. He stood straight and silent.

The Jew's lack of fear irritated the troop-leader. With a sudden motion, he thrust out his hand and twined his fingers in all the hair on one side of the Jew's face; he caught the ear-lock, a part of the whiskers, and some of the beard. "Repeat, 'I am a Jewish swine - I have no honor'," the troop leader commanded.

Itzig-Meyer repeated, "I am a Jewish swine - I have no honor."

"Louder!"

"I am a Jewish swine - I have no honor."

"Still louder!"

"I am a Jewish swine - I have no honor", Itzig-Meyer shouted.

At this point, the troop-leader pulled at the beard he held in his hand. But the hair was so firmly rooted in Itzig-Meyer's flesh that it did not yield. "God damn", the troop-leader cursed and pulled harder. Still the hair did not give way.

"Here's a real Jew for you! A true Jewish beard," the troop-leader said half jestingly to those about him, a bit mortified that the Jewish beard had not given way easily. He thrust his foot into the Jew's belly and tugged again with all his might. This time he succeeded and the troop-leader held a piece of earlock, a shred of whiskers, and some thick curls from the Jew's long beard.

"You try it", the troop-leader turned to his men and pointed to the Jew's beard.

The trial of strength began. Some of the fellows managed to pull out a handful of the Jew's beard after two or three attempts, but a short chap won the competition. He pulled out a substantial handful with only one mighty tug.

While this was going on, Itzig-Meyer kept standing on the same spot, the white socks showing through his torn slippers. Gaps appeared in what had been his rich heavy beard; now it consisted only of straggling wisps, stuck together with the blood dripping from the wounds on his face. Itzig-Meyer's beard was no longer a beard. It was a moist rag attached to a human face. But the Jew's eyes and bearing remained unchanged. Worst of all, the Gestapo men suddenly bethought themselves, the Jew had failed to cry out during the beard plucking. The troop-leader could not decide whether the Jew's conduct should be viewed as a sign of courage or of Jewish arrogance. If the first was the explanation for the Jew's extraordinary behavior, he might even been ready to give the Jew credit; but, if this was another instance of Hebraic insolence, he had to teach the Jew a lesson. So he asked Itzig-Meyer, "Did it hurt?"

"A little, sir," Itzig-Meyer answered.

The Jew's answer mollified the troop-leader somewhat, but he wanted to be sure. "And who are you?" he asked.

"I am a Jewish swine--I have no honor," Itzig-Meyer called out with all his might.

"There's a decent Jew for you," the troop-leader said satisfied. "Now we'll see what you can do. Harness him to the wagon."

They led Itzig-Meyer to a wagon which stood in the yard. The wagon had a harness made of rope and leather straps such as Warsaw porters frequently used. Itzig-Meyer was yoked to the cart, and several Gestapo men jumped in. One of them seated himself on "the coach-box," and began to prod Itzig-Meyer with a whip. "Giddy-ap, Jew, giddy-ap!"

Itzig-Meyer thrust his long neck out of his open shirt and coat. At the smart of the lash, he stretched his neck forward like an ostrich. Because of the plucked beard his head looked disproportionately big and unwieldly on his scrawny neck. Like an ostrich, also, he set down his thin bony feet before him. His slippers stuck in the moist earth; his feet sank into it; sweat poured from his forehead and from his long neck and lean body. With all his might he tried to pull the wagonwhich kept sinking into the mud because of the weight of the Gestapo men. But the harder Itzig-Meyer pulled the more impossible it became to move the wagon. He tried to change the position of his feet; first he put his right, then his left, foot forward. He tugged with one shoulder, then with the other. Under a rain of lashes he struggled to drag the wagon but he got nothing except mockery for his pains. The wagon did not budge.

"Let another swine help him," called out the troop-leader, who stood watching the scene with his hands in his pockets. The faint gratified smile left his face which again became hard and grave.

A second Jew was dragged forward, a much older man than Itzig-Meyer, with inflamed bleary eyes and a sparse quivering beard. He was harnessed next to Itzig-Meyer. The lashes now fell equally on both Jews. The old Jew tugged at one shaft, Itzig-Meyer at the other.

Itzig-Meyer changed the position of his feet and with all the energy left in his straining breast pulled at the wagon. The old Jew struggled at his side but the wagon did not move. "Let them feel the whip!" the troop-leader ordered.

The lashes fell again, some on Itzig-Meyer, some on the head of the old Jew. Itzig-Meyer kept silent under the blows and continued tugging but at each lash the old Jew would cry out:

"Oi, Father in Heaven! Oi, mother mine!"

The Gestapo men mocked him delightedly:

"Oi, oi, papa! Oi, oi mamma!"

And suddenly Itzig-Meyer found the needed power. As soon as he heard the derisive cries, "Oi, oi, papa," he thrust his neck and shoulders forward, seized the shaft in his bony fingers, planted his feet firmly on the ground,

and tugged again with every ounce of strength. The wagon rolled forward. Itzig-Meyer ran, dragged the old Jew with him.

"The Jew did it, the Jew did it!" shouted the men of the Gestapo, stamping on the floor of the moving wagon.

"A decent Jew", called out the troop-leader. "Unharness him."

Itzig-Meyer was unharnessed. The moisture of his body had soaked through his torn satin coat, and the leather strap had left a wide band across his breast.

"A decent willing Jew-Group A. Shave his beard; let him rest today," directed the troop-leader and left the yard to go back to his office.

Itzig-Meyer was led to a corner. A young Jew, who had been assigned the task of cutting beards, came up to him. With a pair of blunt scissors, he sheared off what remained of Itzig-Meyer's beard, ear-locks, and whiskers. He cut the hair of his head in ridges. When this was over, Itzig-Meyer, without a beard as without a soul, like a brute beast, was brought down into a cellar where, were other Jews who had been seized on the streets that day and rounded up for forced labor.

It was the twilight of an early autumn day. A large batch of Jews, returning from work, poured into the cellar. Old and young were among them. Some were smooth-shaven and wore suits; others were dressed in long orthodox robes. Some had had their beards plucked out like Itzig-Meyer; the beards of others had been overlooked. Here and there one could see a face on which the beard had begun to grow again.

The Jews threw themselves down on the ground just as they were, their faces and clothing caked with dirt and sweat. Some lay without speaking, still breathing heavily - the heavy breathing accentuated the silence. Some sat - and remained seated. All kicked off their shoes, boots, or slippers, and clasped their swollen, wounded feet. These looked as though they had marched hundreds of miles, climbed over mountains, or knocked endlessly against rocks. The men, lying or seated, seemed to have become merely - feet. Each man, all his emotions, sensibilities, and interests, was concentrated and absorbed in his swollen suffering feet.

Suddenly a voice was heard reciting the Hebrew prayer of Kaddish:

Yithgaddal v'yithkaddash sheme rabba - "Exalted and hallowed by God's great name."

They turned their heads in the direction of the voice. Their feet were forgotten; the familiar prayer, here sounding so strangely, roused them from their stupor. They could dimly see the figure of a Jew in a tattered satin robe, wearing a hat tied to his head by a colored kerchief as though he had a toothache, swaying back and forth in prayer beside the wall.

The prayer suddenly called them back to a world that seemed to have been lost forever when they had been brought to the cellar. Letting go their feet, a few Jews jumped up and went to the corner where Itzig-Meyer was standing and began to pray with him, swaying back and forth in unison. But the majority remained seated and looked fearfully toward the door. A few

voices were heard expostulating:

"Finish your prayers quickly."

"Quicker, quicker, before someone comes in."

They prayed rapidly. Hastily they recited the Kedushah, the proclamation of the holiness and kingship of God, and the Shemoneh Esreh, the Eighteen Blessings prescribed in the liturgy.

Soon a long whistle sounding through the crowded cellar interrupted the Hallel, the psalms of praise. The men grabbed their shoes, bound up the wounds on their feet as best they could, and formed lines. They walked out two by two, each carrying a tin plate. They marched to the pump in the yard, washed their faces and hands, and dried themselves on the corners of their garments. Then they filed into a mess-hall with long benches where Jewish women were preparing a thin potato soup in large kettles. Each person received a plate of soup and a piece of bread, and they sat down to eat.

Like a well-drilled soldier, Itzig-Meyer with his bandaged face had been marching along as though he were a veteran of the labor battalion. The Gestapo man, who kept an eye on him, found no cause for complaint.

Before Itzig-Meyer took a bite, he made the customary benediction on breaking bread. He mumbled the first half but one could hear the concluding words:

"Who bringest forth bread from the earth."

The Jews, who had thrown themselves wolfishly on their meager portions of thin soup for which they had waited all day long, held their spoons still for a moment. Itzig-Meyer's benediction had struck a chord of memory. Some stopped eating and muttered the words after him. Others contented themselves with a brief "Amen". The Gestapo men, stationed at the door of the open kitchen, noticed that something was afoot, but the incident passed so rapidly that none could make out what had happened. When the meal was over, the Jews, Itzig-Meyer among them, cleaned their plates as usual and trooped out.

The next morning, before the dawn had begun to light the cellar windows, the wretched beings lying on the straw sacks were wakened, not by the whistle of the Gestapo guard as usual, but by the voice of Itzig-Meyer reciting the Kaddish. A few rose hastily and followed suit; the rest tried to sleep till the blast of the whistle.

When they were all led out into the yard, Itzig-Meyer, the long ends of his robe tucked into his belt, was assigned to work with Group A.

They walked a short stretch outside the city limits to a field through which a road was being cut. There Itzig-Meyer saw other Jews also working under the supervision of Gestapo guards. One group was digging a ditch; another was hauling the excavated earth and throwing it on the road-bed. Many men, naked to the waist, were lifting stones from a great heap and carrying them to the road on their bare breasts. Younger man were harnessed to a great steel roller which they dragged over the stones. Itzig-Meyer was assigned to the group whose task it was to haul stones.

The Gestapo guard ordered him to take off his long robe like the rest. He obeyed. Then he was told to remove his blouse, the small fringed shawl worn by every orthodox Jew under his upper garment, and his shirt. He obeyed promptly except when he had to remove the shawl; then he hesitated for a moment. However, the glance of the guard brought him to. He remained only in his trousers which were held up by suspenders thrown over his bare shoulders. The colored kerchief was still around his face. With one quick tug the guard pulled the kerchief and the hat off his head. Itzig-Meyer's face appeared in its full nakedness. Only yesterday he had created a sensation with his full glistening beard but now he looked like a semi-shaven convict or some other disreputable character. There was no beard left for the guard to pull. Instead, he shoved him in the belly with his booted foot, and sent him to work.

When it came to Itzig-Meyer's work, however, the Gestapo guard could find no cause for complaint. Itzig-Meyer worked peacefully, even eagerly, as though he wished to satisfy some inner standard of his own. He would take as heavy a load of stones as he could possibly carry, and he would go briskly back and forth, allowing himself not a moment's respite.

It was a hot day in early autumn. The sun blazed on Itzig-Meyer's bare head; the sweat running from his brow moistened the dried clots of blood on the torn skin of his face. Drops of blood began to ooze from the clots, mixed with the sweat which dripped from his head and hair, and ran down his perspiring body. But Itzig-Meyer did his job. Occasionally, he would try to wipe his naked body with his bare hands. Most of the time, however, he let the sweat and blood run down and worked away. Even the guard was pleased.

"There's a good willing Jew, a decent Jew. What are you?"

"I am a Jewish swine - I have no honor," Itzig-Meyer shouted.

The half hour of the rest which was allotted to the group was spent by Itzig-Meyer like the others: he held his feet in his hands.

Toward nightfall, when the Jews were being led back to their quarters, they came upon a great crowd of people outside the low fence that surrounded the brick building. When they reached the gate, Itzig-Meyer noticed a tall pole rising from the courtyard. Three corpses with long bare feet, from which the boots had been stripped, were swaying from the top. The crowd outside stood gaping at the bodies which had been left hanging in order to intimidate the population. A few Christian women knelt on the pavement and prayed with eyes closed. Others stood around in a stony silence.

"Isaac has been hanged," a Jew standing next to Itzig-Meyer muttered to himself.

"Blessed be Thy judgments," Itzig-Meyer whispered seemingly to himself.

"He talked back. I told him not to talk back. They call it breach of discipline," the Jew kept muttering.

"We are all in God's hand," Itzig-Meyer whispered.

This time the Jews returning to the cellar were more crushed than usual. Even when they were finally resting on their straw sacks, they did not have the courage to discuss the happening. Death cast its shadow over them. They were even afraid to breathe heavily as on other days. They lay or sat clasping their feet.

"Exalted and hallowed be God's great name." This time Itzig-Meyer's voice sounded louder and stronger.

"Does he want to bring this calamity down on our heads, too?" some began to protest.

"Didn't he see what happened?"

Fewer Jews went to join Itzig-Meyer at the wall. More voices were heard expostulating:

"Quicker, quicker!"

"And thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might," Itzig-Meyer prayed, pronouncing each word clearly.

"Enough, enough," frightened voices urged from every corner.

Itzig-Meyer mumbled the rest of the prayer.

The week passed by. Itzig-Meyer distinguished himself by his obedience, good discipline, and industry. He became the favorite of the Gestapo guards. They set him up as a model for the other Jews. "A decent Jew!" Jokingly, they said they would make him the troop-leader of the Jews. And Itzig-Meyer kept doing his work quietly and conscientiously without a moment of protest.

All this went on till Friday. On Friday afternoon, toward sundown, the guard noticed that Itzig-Meyer was restless. Each time he reached the heap of stones to take his load, he would stop and scan the sky to observe the position of the sun. The guard had already roused him several times from his abstraction with a lash of the whip across his head. But Itzig-Meyer continued to be visibly agitated. With large frightened eyes he kept watching the sky.

When the Jews were being led back from work, Itzig-Meyer walked hurriedly as though he would like to get ahead of his group. His partner could hardly keep him in step. Fortunately, they reached their quarters before a star appeared in the heavens. No sooner were they in the cellar than Itzig-Meyer rushed to the wall and began to pray:

"Exalted and hallowed be God's great name."

"Quicker, quicker!"

This time Itzig-Meyer did not let himself be hurried. Reverently he recited the Friday evening prayers. Then from his pocket he took a piece of bread which he had managed to save from his meager ration, and pronounced the Kiddush, the hallowing of the Sabbath:

"And the heaven and the earth were finished and all their host. . ."

The solitary service went off quietly without interruption. But the next morning on Saturday, after he had roused everyone with his prayers, Itzig-Meyer remained standing beside the wall. When the guard blew his whistle, all rushed to get into line, but Itzig-Meyer did not stop swaying back and forth.

"Itzig-Meyer, come!" one of his fellows called.

He kept on swaying.

"Itzig-Meyer!"

"Drag him from there!"

But Itzig-Meyer would not let himself be pulled away. He kept on praying.

"You're risking your neck, Itzig-Meyer," a final voice was heard pleading.

But Itzig-Meyer remained alone beside the wall.

A few minutes later, he felt the lash of a whip across his head. He heard shrill cries:

"Damn Jew, get going!"

Itzig-Meyer kept on praying. Someone kicked him in the side and punched his face. He nearly fell but regained his balance. A savage voice was shouting at him:

"Get out!"

"Kind gentleman, I can't go today; it is the day of rest," Itzig-Meyer answered meekly, and tried to smile appeasingly in spite of his bloody nose.

"What?"

"Today is our Sabbath, the day of rest. I can't work today."

The guard stopped beating him. He seized him by the arm and led him out of the cellar to the office of the troop-leader. The guard clicked his heels and saluted:

"Heil Hitler!"

"Heil Hitler! What has happened?

"A breach of discipline."

The troop-leader looked at Itzig-Meyer narrowly. He recognized him. This was the Jew with the long beard about whom he had received a report, "willing". Despite the thorough schooling of the troop-leader, Itzig-Meyer aroused some strain of compassion in him. Whatever the reason, whether it was Itzig-Meyer's exemplary behaviour or the fun of the beard-plucking which the troop-leader still remembered, he wanted, if possible, to save this

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curious Jew. He rose, walked over to Itzig-Meyer who stood calmly before him with an idiotic smile on his blood-spattered face, and took the whip from the guard. He flashed it over Itzig-Meyer's head.

"What are you?"

"I am a Jewish swine - I have no honor," Itzig-Meyer shouted loudly.

"Well, now go to work, Jew."

"Kind gentleman, I can't work today. It's the Sabbath."

"Take him away," the troop-leader commanded.

"Heil Hitler!"

"Heil Hitler!"

The troop-leader lifted the telephone receiver; then he stopped. Something was bothering him. He called to the guard who was leading Itzig-Meyer away:

"Show him the gallows."

Itzig-Meyer was brought to the scaffold.

"Do you know what this is, Jew?"

"Yes, this is where men are hanged," Itzig-Meyer answered.

"You will hang if you don't go to work."

"Kind gentleman, I have already explained. It's the Sabbath. It would be a sin."

The troop-leader telephoned the authorities for instructions. He received this order: "Hang the Jew, Itzig-Meyer Rosenkranz, for breach of discipline at 6 P.M. today together with two Catholics."

When Itzig-Meyer was led to the gallows, he once more began to scan the sky. He turned to the troop-leader who stood near him:

"Kind gentleman, I want to ask you something; you are good to me."

"What is it, Jew?"

"Please wait until the stars come out. Today is the Sabbath."

"What are you?"

"I am a Jewish swine - I have no honor," Itzig-Meyer called out lustily as he had been taught.

The troop-leader's grim face lit up with a faint smile:

"I'll hang the others before you."

"Exalted and hallowed be God's great name," Itzig-Meyer chanted clearly, and began to sway back and forth.

He was led to the noose in the midst of the Shemoneh Esreh. His lips were still whispering:

"Thou art One, and Thy name is One."

When the Jews came back from work that evening, they again found a large crowd outside the fence around the courtyard. Again they saw three bodies hanging. Two of the corpses were still jerking on the ropes, but the long feet of one were already stiff and quiet like the hands of a clock which has stopped. The Jews recognized him.

They walked into the courtyard in silence with heads bowed, trying not to see the three bodies. Nobody made a sound. But no sooner had they reached the cellar than another Jew took Itzig-Meyer's place at the wall where he had prayed each night.

Nobody whispered nervously, "Quicker, quicker!" One after another the Jews arose and stood beside the wall:

Yithgaddal v'yithkaddash sheme rabba. Exalted and hallowed be God's great name. . . .

** ** **

ISRAEL

AVRAM, MAURICE, JOEL: A STORY

by Corinne Boren

Avram is nine years old. His father keeps reminding him that in another four years he will have to be ready for his Bar Mitzvah. As far as his memory can go back, Avram remembers the sight of the cramped and twisted streets, the dilapidated houses, the primitive synagogue, and that section of Casablanca where he lives, which everybody calls "Mellah" (ghetto). Avram goes to an old "cheder" where the old rabbi teaches him to recite the Bible and to pray. He does what many other Jewish children are doing under the supervision of their teachers.

Avram does not know that more than 50,000 Jews are living in the city of Casablanca and outside the ghetto, that more than 150,000 live in other Moroccan cities. He cannot visualize such numbers. He does know, however, that all his friends are Jewish, that the parents and relatives of his friends are Jewish. The streets he knows are filled with Jews.

He was born in this country and so were his parents and their parents; yet, they have never been given the full rights of a citizen. He has never been told that even as a Jew he is entitled to equal citizenship and to equal protection. He knows that Jewish history is full of persecution against his people by non-Jews. He knows of humiliations and pogroms executed by Moslem fanatics, always ready to destroy his home, his religion, his life. He lives in fear. He thinks and lives as a second-class Moroccan.

Since the birth of the State of Israel the Jews in all parts of Morocco, and other Arab countries with a minority of Jews, are considered as Zionists and enemies. They are subject to open violence and discrimination. Many times, Avram is one of the victims. His eyes become filled with tears and he asks, "Why, why all this?"

One afternoon, Avram hears his older friends talk about Zionism. He cannot pronounce the word very well, but it sounds like magic to him. That same evening, a representative of Youth Aliyah visits his parents. They talk about chalutziut, galut, aliyah, about modern Hebrew culture and religion. Then they talk about Avram's future. The representative asks Avram's parents to allow him to join the Youth Aliyah Center to prepare him for aliyah to Israel. He tells them of the advantages of living in Israel and that Israel needs people like Avram and his parents, people who would help build Israel. At the end of the visit, Avram's parents tell the representative that they are too old to make the trip, but they are willing to let their child go. They feel that the future of Israel rests on the backs of the Jewish youth all over the world.

After a few months of preparation in the Youth Aliyah Center, Avram and a group of other Moroccan Jews board a ship to Israel. On the boat, Avram meets Jewish boys and girls from Rumania, Bulgaria, France, Holland, Germany, and other countries which Avram has never heard of.

Among the boys is a teenager from France named Maurice. Avram likes the French boy and they soon become friendly. Both boys know French so they have no trouble understanding each other. At first, Avram cannot understand

why Maurice has left France to go to Israel, but by the end of the trip, Avram is convinced that Maurice did well in joining the Youth Aliyah.

Maurice was born in Paris sixteen years ago when France was occupied by the Nazis. His parents succeeded in living in Paris until 1943 while the Nazis were arresting and deporting every Jew they caught. When the situation became too dangerous, Maurice and his parents moved to a small village where Maurice was put into a children's shelter. That same year, his parents were captured by the Nazis and were killed like the millions of other Jews who had died before them.

At the time of the liberation of Paris, Maurice was two years old. His uncle adopted him and from then on, he led a happy life. His uncle cherished him and tried hard to make him forget his grief by being a father to him. Maurice had many friends and was liked very much by his teachers and friends alike. He had the same privileges and freedom as did the other French boys and girls his age.

Among Maurice's non-Jewish friends were many who had parents who had suffered during the Nazi occupation. Some had lost their fathers on the battlefields; some had lost a sister or brother in an air raid; some had died in concentration camps. None of them was killed for his religious belief or origin. But his Jewish friends who had survived the war had had relatives killed by the Nazis only because they were Jewish. His uncle taught him to respect their memory as well as that of the millions of Jews who were killed, but Maurice could never forget that major difference.

As Maurice grew older, he studied Jewish history and the culture of his people. He learned that Hitler still had many friends and that if the war had lasted any longer, not one Jew would have been alive in France, or any other country occupied by the Nazis. Maurice felt strongly attached to the Jewish people and to their culture. He felt that his future did not lie in France but in Israel. He felt that in Israel he could develop fully as a Jew and be able to defend himself in any circumstance.

A certain percentage of the olim on the ship know how to speak Hebrew. The others need interpreters in order to understand each other. Each child comes from a different surrounding but they all have the same aim: to start a new life in Israel. The largest group of children is Polish. The story told by Joel could have been the story of any one of these boys and girls.

Joel's parents were forced to work for the Nazis in Poland. They made uniforms for the soldiers. When they became too weak to work, they were sent to Germany to be killed. But the advance of the American army scared the camp commandant, and he ordered his men to stop the extermination of the Jews. Having said this, he fled.

When the American soldiers reached the camp, they took care of the survivors. They gave them food and medical assistance. They also organized centers for "Displaced Persons," for the sick and the weak, for those who did not wish to return to the country where they had suffered so much. Joel's parents did not want to go back to Poland where so many of their friends and relatives had perished. They remained at the DP camp where Joel was born--a homeless and displaced family. Because of the mother's illness, Joel's

parents were among the last to leave the DP camp. The blessed day finally arrived when they with their son were en route to their new home.

The hearts of the young olim are full of hope and joy and the ship is filled with laughter and dance. They approach the shores of Israel and the port of Haifa. Avram can see clearly the first houses of the "Promised Land" of which his rabbi in Casablanca had so often told him.

Joel, Avram, and Maurice are children of the Jewish people dispersed all over the world, but their ancestors were born in Israel. The boy from Morocco, the boy from France, and the boy from Poland are returning to the land of their fathers. They share the same history and religion. They share the suffering of the Jewish people.

Avram, Maurice, and Joel not only have a common past, they have a common goal. They want to build a new life for themselves and to help build a new future for their people. They want to become constructive citizens in Israel. They seek to know Hebrew culture and to be a part of an independent nation, with its own laws, its own way of life. They want to be strong and defend themselves from their enemies. They want to be the builders of Israel where democracy and justice will prevail.

WATER BOY

by Eliezer Smoll

In the month of Av, in the year 5708 (1948), during the days of the truce I stayed in an encampment in the Sharon. Since the cannons were silent, and the guns rested, I listened to tales told by the soldiers. And this is the first story. I heard it from a young soldier who was among the defenders of the Old City of Jerusalem:

- Our position was in the Southeastern sector of the Old City, behind a block of big houses, called "Batei Machasseh." We actually sat in the wall, in a hollow above "Shaar Hashpatot" hidden by stones and sandbags.

- Did you ever look down from the "Shaar Hashpatot" towards the Southeast?

You gaze into the depths of our history. The scene that spreads before you is so intoxicating. Just so did this area look two and three thousand years ago. Nothing has changed in this old grey vista. There amid the bent olive trees on the slopes, David escapes from Absolom, his son, and turns to the desert. There, opposite you on the sloping cliffs, stands the army of Sancheriv, with bows drawn towards the City of David. And here, at your very feet, are the Roman camps besieging the city.

- David.

- Chizkiyahu.

- Bar-Giora.

Not a sound and not a murmur. The heart trembles as one sees the past glory turned to dust, and the blood of David, Chizkiyahu, and Bar-Giora, fertilizer for the vegetable patches planted by the Arabs.

- Ra-ra-tat

- Boom! - Boom! - Boom!

There is no time to think. No time to dream in the realms of history. The legionnaires, messengers of the snake of Ammon, bombard us with fire from machine-guns and mortars. We are shelled from Kfar Shiloach, and machine-gunned from the courtyard opposite. There are four of us holding the position with two rifles and one machine-gun. They have a lot of ammunition, and their guns are firing constantly. And we - "spare, spare bachurim, spare your ammunition" - warns the commander of old Jerusalem. Our stores are soon empty and no one leaves or comes through the walls.

Two, three days pass with no word from the outside. We are caught in a cross fire from all sides. We have no more bread, and our water has become slimy. Our clothes are getting tattered, and our skin is covered with a coat of stinking mud.

- Ho, David, oh, David!

- Ho, David melech Israel chai v'kayam!

The rays of the rising sun illuminate the mountains each morning, and the reddish-purple sunset glows in the horizon at dusk. And the nights, dark thick blackness, full of fear and tension. Enemies all around. The tired eye glued to the little window, and the finger taut on the Trigger.

- Who goes there?

- Oshriko.

- Who are you?

- A messenger.

- Quick, come up.

- They are shooting at me.

- Duck. Watch out!

- Well, I got here.

- Are you a Jew? - I asked.

- Shma Yisrael.

The messenger, a boy of 12, was dressed in wide pants, and wrapped in a black cape tied at the waist with a rope. His face was indistinguishable, but his voice betrayed that he was an Oriental Jew, a native of the Old City.

- Who sent you?

- The man from the Hagana.

- And where is Daud, the boy who used to come?

- He was killed yesterday, on his way here.

- And what's your name?

- I told you already Oshriko.

- Who are you?

- A Jew from the olim of Salonika.

- What did you come here for, fresh air?

- I brought you bread and cigarettes, and greetings.

- Who sent you?

- The one called Avraham.

- And why didn't he send water.

- I got to the wall twice with a full jug of water on my shoulder, but the Arabs shot at me and broke the jug. Only through God's help did I escape alive.

- It's a dirty shame.

- You haven't got no water? - asks Oshriko in a quivering voice.

- Don't worry I'll get you some.

- How?

- From the other side.

- From the Jordan? we ask laughingly.

- From the Shiloach.

- By aeroplane?

- Why by aeroplane? - Oshriko answers offended, shrugging his shoulders. It's not far, you can walk there in less than 15 minutes.

- How?

- It's very simple - he answers and grins. - I thought about it yesterday and today, and made my plans very carefully and clearly. You will lower me by rope through this little window; I'll sneak over to the stream, fill the canteen and bring back fresh clean water.

- You're talking nonsense.

- I do it every day, 'pon my word.

- What do you mean?

- This is the way I do it. Listen carefully. I put the canteen on my shoulder, and jump from roof to roof through the Old City. I crawl through holes, and steal up silently to one of their wells which is full of fresh water. I fill the canteens, come back and divide it among the bachurim. Our wells are mostly destroyed, and in those left, the water is polluted and it is impossible to drink.

- And they don't catch you?

- Oh, I speak Arabic fluently, and my face is black like theirs, and my clothes also resemble theirs.

- We'll not endanger your life, Oshriko.

- And you, aren't you always in danger?

- We have to do it.

- You have to give your lives for us, and we give nothing in return? - asks the boy angrily.

- Four are stronger than one.

- And aren't four lives more important than the life of one?

- You are still a child, Oshriko.

- I am a child? - answers the boy angrily and impatiently.
- It's already a year that I am Bar-Mitzva, and am used to all sorts of danger. Look, he says, loosening the rope around his waist, it will only take a minute. I'll tie the rope to this turret, and the end you see, reaches the foot of the gate. My body is thin and agile, and I'll squeeze through this hole, holding the rope, and shalom....

- Oshriko!

- Shalom, quiet chaverim!

In a flash of a second, it happened. We didn't have time to catch him. We couldn't get near the rope fast enough. He disappeared like a weasel.

- Oshriko! Come back, - we shouted excitedly.

There was only silence.....and blackness.....and a great fear.

- Quiet chaverim! Our shouting will betray him to the enemy.

We sat like the sons of Jacob, after they sold their little brother Joseph to the Bedouins, ashamed and sad.

- Couldn't you catch him by the rope?

- Why didn't you grab him by his kerchief?

- Why didn't you understand what he was driving at?

- Why didn't you block the opening and prevent his going?

- Four jackasses and not a man among us.

One of us looked through the opening. Another jumped out of our hideout without hesitation, climbed up the wall and began to run after the boy. Silence and blackness and a petrifying fear. A feeling of emptiness and loneliness engulfed us. Shma Yisrael!

Why don't they shoot? It seems as if all eyes are peering at the little boy, as he crawls between rocks and bushes to the streams.

How will we answer to the people who sent the boy: We acted so foolishly.

- Did the rope move?

No, our nerves are quivering.

- What time is it chevra?

- About mid-night.

- It's three hours already since he left, and not a sound.....

- Who goes there?

Silence.

- Listen carefully, isn't someone walking down below?

- Yes, It's steps.

- Who's there?

- Oshriko.

- Are you all right, you urchin?

- I came back without water.

- Hurry, tie the rope around your body, and we'll pull you up.

- I can't chaverim, there is death in the canteen.

- What are you talking about?

- Tie the rope around you, and we'll pull you up.

- Better one should die, than five.

- What did those beasts do to you?

- They put a mine in my canteen and sent me back to you.

- Hurry, untie the canteen, and throw it away.

- They tied my hands behind my back and I can't untie them.

- Wait, we'll come down and help you.

- Your lives are more precious than mine.

- Don't go away, boy!

- You must stay and defend the city!

- Oshriko!

- Look out!

BOOM! --------

A loud explosion cut short our conversation, and the air shuddered and thrust us back into our hideout.

- Oshriko! - We all cried painfully clinging to the opening, - Oshriko!

From across the Shiloach, we heard a mocking laugh, the only answer to our desperate cry.

A TALE OF THREE CITIES

There's no question about it. It just pays to be smart. Of course, that means working hard too, but when all the work is done, it's the idea, the gimmick, that really pays off. It must be so. Otherwise, how would a dummy like me ever get anywhere? And how would I come to be playing with some Israel coins as I write this?

A few weeks ago, before our Kvutza (group) meeting began, we started playing "Which is Better?" You know how that goes. Someone says the Braves will take the penant; another hollers, "No Brooklyn;" the third is a Philly fan. The next thing you know, everyone is shouting and arguing--and you're playing "Which is Better?"

Or someone will innocently say that he thinks Juda Maccabee was our greatest general. It's quiet for a second, the wheels turn, and then--BOOM!-- "You mean Bar Kochba;" another shouts, "No, King David;" others add, "Joshua." And before you know it, we're playing "Which is Better? ".

Take our last time. We were arranging some new pictures on the wall of our meeting room when Larry pointed to one of Haifa and said, "Now there's a city for you. What a view you must have from the top of Mount Carmel. You see the city sloping down, and the sun setting in the Mediterranean, and the mountains of Israel all around."

There was silence for a second. It takes a second for Dani to clear his throat and say, "It's bad enough not to listen to sichot (discussions) but you needn't brag about it. I remember when Abbie said that Tel Aviv is the largest city in Israel. He also told us about the Israel Orchestra and all the theatre groups that have their headquarters there. And don't you remember the pictures he showed us of Rothschild Boulevard and Allenby Street? So how can you compare Tel Aviv with Haifa?"

There was another silence. Then Arnie and Michael were talking at once. I wasn't able to hear it all, because Dani had again cleared his throat, and Joel was trying out his voice. But there were phrases like "Jerusalem is the oldest city. That's where the Knesset (Parliament) is;" and "City of David". Then right away, there was quite a turmoil, chaos, and confusion. But what do you expect? "Which is Better?" isn't a quiet game for rest period.

"SHEKET! SHEKET! Hold on! SHEKET!"

"Sheket shmeket! It can't compare to Tel Aviv....Oh," said Michael, "Shalom, Moshe, we didn't hear you come in."

I'M surprised you heard anything," said Moshe, our Menahel (leader). "It sounded like the closing session of a Veida. What's the trouble?"

"These overgrown lumpheads won't believe that Haifa is the best city in Israel," said Larry, but he didn't get a chance to say more because it started again. I'd tell you about that too, but I think you've had enough noise for one issue. If you want more, play your own game.

When Moshe brought us down to normal again, he was laughing. "Seems to me I've heard this song before. Why, I coudn't go three days in Israel without hearing that argument. But you've saved me a lost of work. You see, I had planned some sichot on these cities for next month, but since everyone knows so much about them, we'll turn it around. Instead of my talking, let's each group pre-

pare a case and give our arguments starting in two weeks."

"But that won't solve anything."

"No, it won't, " said Moshe, "But we could have some older chaverim down to judge and I'll give a stack of Israel coins to the team which they think is most convincing."

So that was it. You must admit Moshe used a pretty shrewd technique to get us to work. But we showed him. I don't think anyone paid much attention to his sicha that day. Our little wheels were already churning with arguments.

Afterwards we met in our teams to plan things. I chose Jerusalem. You ask why I didn't speak up before? Well, to be frank, my voice is starting to change and who likes to hear it cracking up and down. But I was right in the middle of this discussion and "We of Jerusalem" planned it well. Billy was going to work on a history of the city for its 3000 years, and the rest of us were going to talk about a different period in "our city's life. Adina had thetime of Solomon's Temple, Rachel took the Second Temple, Menucha volunteered for the Middle Ages, and I had modern Jerusalem. I also had a gimmick.

Like I said before, we worked hard and I also may have mentioned the Israel coins I'm playing with now. Sure we won. What did you expect? I had a gimmick.

Now right now, I could tell you how we worked for two weeks, how we sent spies to see what the other teams were doing, how we lost hours of sleep preparing the script. But you wouldn't believe that -- and neither would I. To be frank, we had only one other meeting, and we argued a lot, and watched television but somehow we managed to finish the script.

The day came. When our team reached the Bayit (center), we were rather surprised. Our whole group was there, the judges were there, Moshe was there -- and so were two walls full of pictures, one on Tel Aviv and another on Haifa. But were we afraid? Did we think we'd lose? Were we scared? You can bet your mas money (dues) we were.

The Tel Avivians were first. They had used the wall to make a big map of the city and had filled it in with pictures so it looked like an aerial photograph. Well, almost like one, except that Ben Gurion's face was two blocks square.

They began with a few songs about the city and then took us on a tour. First, they pointed out the white stucco buildings and then we traveled down Ben Yehuda Street into the center of the town and were shown all the theatres, museums and movies. Then they showed pictures of the port and the factories and finished at the picture of fifty buses taking on passengers in the Central Bus Station.

Then came the Haifaniks. Shifra said, "Any fool can see that Haifa is the city of splendor." And before we could get the idea, the lights went out and they began showing the movies that her father had taken in Israel. Quite a gimmick. They even sang quiet sea songs as the camera showed the stone houses, the port area, and the beautiful landscaping of the Persian Gardens. But the thing which really got us were the pictures of Haifa at night. They were taken from a kibbutz ten miles north of the city and we saw Mount Carmel as a flaming hill, completely covered by the lights of the city's buildings. Then just like a travelogue, Jerry closed with "and now we leave Haifa, the Queen City, the Port City, the Splendor of Israel."

The lights went on, and it was our turn. We looked at the judges and our Kvutza and I even began to wonder if my gimmick would work. Then to top it off, Billy

spoke too long, and everyone was getting restless. But Adina did well. She always does. We heard how David conquered the city of 3,000 years ago, how Solomon built the Temple, and how Jerusalem's Mount Zion became the symbol of Israel. Rachel described the battle of the city which destroyed the Temple and told of the people who came back after fifty years to build again. Menucha recalled the prayers and psalms about Jerusalem and reminded us that at every wedding we break a glass to remember the destruction of the Holy City. And when she recited the line, "If I forget thee O Jerusalem...." we sang the song with those words in Hebrew. I could feel the coins rattling in our hands already.

Then it was my turn. So changing voice and all, I began:

"It's one thing to like a city you never saw and only know through pictures, but it's something else to be there yourself. Now none of us were in Jerusalem but we rest our case on the word of someone who was."

Then with a flourish, I drew out the letter. "A friend of ours has been in Jerusalem and I'd like to read you what he said. The letter, you will notice, is from Abbie (our last Menahel) and I'm sure he knows what he's talking about. After all, he lives in Israel."

So, smiling at the startled faces, I began reading:

"Dear Osher, I can best answer your question by describing my first Shabbat in the Capital City. As I was riding there by bus from Tel Aviv, I somehow expected that we would come to the top of a hill, look around and there would be Jerusalem before us. When this didn't happen after two hours, I asked someone and he answered, 'See those buildings around us. This is Jerusalem'.

"You can imagine how I felt. This wasn't at all the city I had expected, but I left the bus and walked around, awed by the idea of finally being in the great city. I went to a friend's house for the Shabbat meal but it didn't seem much different than Shabbat in Urim or Haifa. When I told this to my friend he laughed and said, 'I know how to satisfy you. Let's go to Mount Zion.' So we left the house and walked down the street.

"Already things were different. It wasn't something I could point out, but I felt the Shabbat ease and peace floating all around me in the quiet dignity of the city. We crossed an open space and began to walk up the hill called Mount Zion.

"And when we came to the top and stood by the tomb of King David, I first saw Jerusalem. To the west, was the New City stretching into the plains, in the south, were the mountains flanking the Dead Sea, and in the north and east was the Old City. I asked about a high dome not far from us in the Old City. My friend took a breath and said, 'You are looking at the site of the Temple!

"The tingling ran up and down my skin. To think that I could be in the city of David and Solomon and look on the streets that the Prophets and Maccabees and the greats of Israel once walked. But I don't write for HABONEH and I'm afraid I can't really tell you how I felt. But after standing still for five minutes, I sang the song about Jerusalem that we used to sing at our Onegei Shabbat, and I'm not ashamed to admit that when I finished, I had to bring a handkerchief up to my eyes.

HOW I ALMOST GATHERED IN AN EXILE

I'm sure you've all heard of Kibbutz Galuyot, the ingathering of the exiles. This is the enormous project of bringing to Israel thousands and thousands of Jews from various countries, especially from countries where the conditions of Jewish life are difficult and dangerous. During the three-and-a-half years since the proclamation of the State of Israel more than five hundred thousand Jews have come to Israel.

This great migration has had two very interesting results: countries like Yemen and Iraq which have had sizeable Jewish communities living under persecution for many centuries were suddenly emptied of their Jews. And Israel on the other hand, doubled in population almost overnight.

Israel doubled in population, but Israel multiplied manyfold in the types of Jews which make it up. Everyone who has visited Israel has been struck dumb with amazement by the exotic mixture of Oriental and European Jews which characterizes the population. There are Jews who don't at all look like the Jews whom we know in New York and Chicago or like the Jews whom our parents and grand-parents knew in Warsaw and Vilna. Many of them speak Arabic, dress like Arabs, and are dark-skinned like Arabs. But they are Jews. And one of the big tasks of Israel will be to make of all these different Jews, so strange to each other, but with so much in common, one strong and healthy people.

This summer, on my visit to Israel, I had my own private little adventure with Kibbutz Galuyot. In fact, I almost gathered in an exile - single-handed. This is how it was...

One day, I panted breathlessly into the bus depot at Affule. The bus for Kfar Yehoshua was already there and a line was forming.

"Too bad for me if I miss that bus," I thought. "They're expecting me for supper, and I'll just barely make it as it is." There was also a line at the ticket window.

"Can't take a chance and wait there for a ticket. I'll buy one on the bus."

I got in line. "I'd like a ticket for Kfar Yehoshua."

"Oh, you would now, would you?" thundered the nahag (driver). "Well, you can buy one at the ticket window. We don't sell them on the bus at main depots. Whattaya think the ticket window is for?"

I shrunk. Bus drivers can be just as big and burly (and insistent) in Hebrew as in English. And I had heard how tough they could be.

"Well," I ventured, rather meekly, "can I put my knapsack on a seat so I won't have to stand? After all, I did wait in line."

"Oh, all right. But next time buy your ticket when and where you're supposed to."

"Yes, sir."

The line behind me was getting impatient during this conversation and began to push. I moved quickly back in the bus, found a seat by a window, and deposited my stuff.

Then I went out through the rear door and made a dash for the ticket window. The line was now quite short. But I stood in it as if on pins and needles, one eye on the bus.

My turn. "Ticket to Kfar Yehoshua, please."

Ticket in hand, I raced toward the bus. The doors were already shut, the motor on. And just as I approached, the bus began to move.

"Stop! Stop!" I shouted, waving my arm frantically. I was in luck. The The driver heard me. He stopped. The door opened. I got on.

"You again!" The driver smiled.

"Yes, sir." I returned his smile weakly.

"Next time you'll know better."

"Yes, sir."

I went to my seat, thinking how clever I had been to reserve it with my knapsack, for every seat was taken, and two or three people were standing. Standing in front of my seat, leaning her elbow on the window ledge was a little Iraqi girl. In the seat next to mine, with her back to the window and her feet in the aisle, was an Iraqi woman with an infant in her lap.

I slid into my seat behind the little standing girl, putting my knapsack down between my legs. I was tired and in no mood to be chivalrous. The bus began to move. The little girl stood gazing out of the window. She didn't bother me and she seemed comfortable, so I let her stand there. After a while she put her head down on her arm, which rested on the window ledge. The road was not smooth, and the rude jolting of the bus shook her head up and down on her arm. She dozed. It looked as if any minute her arm would slip off the ledge and her head would hit the metal rim. I decided to take her on my lap.

I tapped the woman next to me, supposing her to be the mother. "May I take your daughter on my lap," I asked in Hebrew.

The woman shook her head and made an expression which seemed to say, "She's not mine." I remembered having seen another Iraqi Jewess on the bus up front, and decided this was her daughter. I didn't want to shout, and I was intending no harm, so I gingerly lifted the child into my arms and onto my lap. She was fast asleep.

She would have a far less fitful nap on my lap, I said to myself looking down at the child. She was beautiful, about three years old, with a rich brown complexion and soft, jet black hair. Her arm had three ugly sores, which seemed to be healing. I remembered what I had read about the unsanitary conditions in Iraq. I had a warm feeling toward the little girl, so sweet and helpless, asleep, with her head resting in the crook of my arm.

I looked out the window, thinking alternately of the passing scene and of the little girl. In this way, nearly an hour passed. We would soon be at Kfar Yehoshua and I hoped that somehow the mother would notice her daughter and take her from me. I didn't have the heart to wake her.

Finally, the young Iraqi woman in the front of the bus rose and came toward me. She smiled broadly, and before I could say anything she asked:

"Is she yours?"

"No," I replied laughingly, enjoying her joke. "She's all yours."

"Why no," she said, this time with obvious seriousness.

My heart dropped into my stomach and left a large empty space in my chest. In rapid succession, frightening pictures passed before my eyes. I saw an Iraqi woman running around the Affule bus station, frantically looking around for her child. How could she know that her child had aimlessly wandered onto a bus and was now asleep in my arms, miles from Affule. I pictured the red tape and the offices I'd have to go through in Tel Aviv, searching for the mother. Finally, I pictured the look on my wife's face as I landed in New York and walked off the plane with my newly-adopted Iraqi daughter.

I was stunned. I was helpless.

"Whose is it?" I nearly cried out. But the words stuck and came out as a soft-spoken appeal. The young woman from up front looked around.

"Are you sure she doesn't belong to this woman?" she asked, pointing to the woman sitting beside me.

"I've already asked her," I replied.

"Well, there are no other Iraqis on the bus," she said.

I don't remember for certain, but when I think back on that episode I can imagine that large beads of perspiration must have glistened on my forehead.

"Better be careful, fellow, or they'll say its yours." The voice came from the man in front of me. The girl next to him turned around.

"What's going onZ" someone asked.

"What's the trouble?" echoed four or five voices.

"It's that young man there with the Iraqi child on his lap," said one.

"What of it," queried another.

"He doesn't know whose she is," came the answer.

"Doesn't know whose she is?"

"That's what I said, whose she is."

Half a dozen people were now out of their seats and gathering around me. I felt foolish and frenzied. The bus was all a-flutter and a-jabber.

"Whose she is!"

"Whose is she?"

"Whose is who?"

"Whose is the little girl?"

The Hebrew words were in a whirl about my ears. I was lost.

"What's going on?" boomed the driver.

"He doesn't know whose she is," answered several people in chorus.

"Whose she is?" boomed the driver.

"Whose she is!" was the refrain.

The bus ground to a stop. The driver trudged down the aisle, through the little crowd which stood gaping at me and chattering.

"Now, let me see," grunted the driver.

Well, to make a long tale short and to take you out of that awful suspense, the driver took the situation in hand. He asked a few questions, got a few answers and then turned to the young Iraqi woman who sat beside me with the infant on her lap. Her feet were still in the aisle, her back to the window and she looked very timid and forlorn. He addressed her in Hebrew. Her face showed puzzlement. She shook her head.

"She doesn't know Hebrew yet," explained the driver.

He questioned her in Arabic.

Of course it was her child! What is all the fuss and bother about? The driver interpreted. The crowd laughed. I drew a deep breath and sighed.

We drove on. A few minutes later, the woman got up, shook the little girl who had slept through everything and with the infant in one arm and the child clutched by the other hand, descended from the bus.

I smiled an inner smile. My face must have shown my embarrassment.

When it came my turn to get off I walked forward briskly trying to make light of my shame. But everyone giggled and the man who had sat in front of me said in a loud voice.

"Close call, fellow."

"That's right," I retorted, trying to be jovial. I dreaded the bus driver's farewell.

"Good-bye, troublemaker, good riddance!"

"Good-bye," I said softly.

I descended from the bus and walked toward the entrance to Kfar Yehoshua. My legs felt a little foreign to me, and I had the feeling that I was dreaming. But awake or asleep, I felt that I was now an expert on the ingathering of the exiles. Do you blame me?

THREE JEWS

by Libby

Three Jews stood side by side on a crowded "Egged" bus. . . Three Jews of different appearances, different desires. . . Three Jews who act differently, speak differently. . . Three Jews from three worlds, jostling in a crowded "Egged" bus.

Natan is now an old man. He is a chalutz who came to what was then Palestine in 1919. His face is drawn and withered, his body tired and humbled. But his hands--his hands are strong and vital and young. . . the jutting veins, the hardened skin, the firm, long fingers--they are a worker's hands. But Natan's hands were not always so. The veins were once invisible, the skin pink, the fingers soft and ink-stained. Oh, that was so many years ago. The hands ate and talked and wrote, but never worked. Then one day, the fingers began to twitch nervously. They shunned the soft palm, the pink skin, the smooth touch. They refused to hold the Russian pen in the Russian class-room. They reached towards the soil. It was these fingers that tore the chains of slavery from Natan's soul and led him to his people and his land. Dirt-stained nails, blistered palms--Happy Hands! The hands of a 65 year old man, that were granted their rest, and yet cannot lie idle. The hands of 65 that till the soil, harvest the crop. The hands of Natan that built and builds Israel.

Saadya is a young man, a Sabra. His face is bold and striking and determined. His body is free and wild and handsome. His talk is fast and proud and headstrong. Clad in the khakhi of "Tzva Hagana L'Israel" (the defense army of Israel), Saadya proclaims the praises of his land to all who will listen. A small, insignificant spot on the map? Not Saadya's Israel! His is the country that resisted the British, fought the Arabs, won its Independence. His is the nation that defends and builds and grows. His is the chosen people -- The young strong, independent youth. His uniform is a sign of spirit and will, of dream and fulfillment. It is a symbol of defense and resistance and strength. . . the khakhi of Natan that defends Israel.

Rachel is a Yemenite immigrant -- young, old? It's hard to say. Her body is slim and weak, her hair thin, black and straight. Her face wears a trusting and searching look. She followed the Messiah to Israel -- close at the heels of his white donkey, on the wings of an eagle. She passed through the curtain that had closed out the light of civilization for thousands of years. The new lightness was blinding, and at first, she could

not open her eyes. But she is ready to learn -- through work, through study, through trial and error. She wants to become a part of this new world. For the Lord God of hosts has brought her here, and she believes in His will. Rachel does not quite understand the place where she lives--the "Maabara" (transition camp). . . a place of chairs and tables and books. So different, so new. But she believes in God Who knows the answer to all of these questions, and Who sent the Messiah to bring her to Israel.

Three Jews. . . Five thousand years ago I saw them on Mount Sinai. Today I met them on a crowded "Egged" bus.

MY NAME IS DANNY

My name is Danny. I am writing in Hebrew because I do not know English well enough yet, and Shmuel has promised me that he would translate everything that I write into English so that I can send it all to you. Shmuel, you must know, is the member of Kfar Hanasi who is taking care of me, so to speak.

It is all a little complicated. I came to Kfar Hanasi when I was six or seven years old; that means about seven or eight years ago. I came from an orphanage because my mother had been killed in an air raid on Tel Aviv during our War of Independence, and my father left my mother before that and has never returned. Shmuel sometimes tells me that I was like a little animal, that I knew only how to throw stones and swear like a trooper, and that I could neither read nor write, and was generally a terrible handful. (He's not kidding either!--Shmuel.) There were another ten or so children of my age, more or less from the same background as myself, and all of us together nearly drove everybody in the kibbutz frantic. Well, just imagine ten kids all like myself. All that has changed now, of course, and we do know how to behave, even if we forget to sometimes. We have nearly finished elementary school now, and next term, we shall go to the big school in Ayelet Hashachar, which is a kibbutz about ten miles away from us, and there we shall continue our schooling.

What I really want to tell you is how we spend our time and something about how we live. From what I have learned, I know that your lives in the United States are not the same as ours, the obvious reason being that you are not kibbutz children. Well, we get up at 6:30, wash and brush our teeth, and go to the classroom which is in a separate building from the house in which we sleep. All the kids in our class sleep in the same house, three to a room, and boys and girls separate, of course. The girls are always so much tidier than we are and always have their little secrets and whisper and giggle, but Chemda, who is the house matron, always says that she wishes that the boys were as tidy as the girls and girls as sports loving as the boys. We have one or two lessons until 8:00 and then we go back to clean up our rooms, the showers, and the whole house. This is a very trying time for us and for Chemda, because we can never clean up clean enough to satisfy her. Shmuel, who is not married, but is very clean, I think, has been trying to teach me to be clean and tidy, but I have a suspicion that he is not satisfied with his handiwork yet. (He still isn't kidding!--Shmuel.) When everything is nice and tidy, we return to the classroom and our lessons continue until midday, when we eat. Then we go to work for two hours in one of the branches of the kibbutz...Shmuel says that I must not mix things up when I am writing but must keep to the subject. So I shall tell you what lessons we have, and afterwards, I shall write about our work, which is a much more interesting subject to write about.

Apart from the subjects which you call "the three R's," we also learn English, history, geography, chemistry, the Old Testament, music and singing, natural history and handicrafts. Our teachers are members of the kibbutz who have studied teaching, but they did not study how to deal with us, so they say, and sometimes we make them very nervous, and they start to shout

and get angry. But afterwards, we are all very good friends again and they take us for hikes to see the country and to learn to recognize the plants, birds, and animals about which we learn during the lessons. If you asked me, I could tell you the names of all the flowers, trees, weeds, birds, and animals which grow or live around here, and so could most of the others in my class. We also have swimming lessons, but only when the swimming pool of the kibbutz is in use, which it is not at the moment because there is not enough money to build a fence around it, and the grown-up members of the kibbutz say that it is too dangerous to let the water in because some of the small kids, who don't deserve any better anyhow, might fall in and drown. So we have to wait until we have a very good harvest and a lot of fruit from the orchards, and then there will be enough money to finish the swimming pool--perhaps. But in the meantime, it is very hard to be patient, because it is so hot in the summer and we love swimming. Still, even if we cannot go swimming, except sometimes when we are taken down to Lake Kinneret, we can and do play a lot of soccer and volleyball and have quite a good team. It is true that we do not always win but Shmuel says that the important thing is to play well and not cheat, even if we do not win. I suppose he is right but it is so much better to win because then nobody quarrels about whose fault it was that we lost and no one is offended because he is accused of losing the game for us.

After we return from work, we are supposed to do our homework, and only after we have done it are we supposed to be free. Well, you probably know what that means. Sometimes I manage to finish the last of the homework just as the teacher comes into the classroom to begin the morning lessons, and if he catches me, then I am in trouble.

We have a light meal at 4:30, and then we can do what we like. We eat all our meals in another separate building where there is a dining hall and small kitchen, but the food itself is brought from the big dining hall where the kibbutz members eat, and ours is the same menu as theirs. After each meal, one of us is detailed to help with the washing up and cleaning the floor, except on Friday nights when we eat with the grown-ups. Actually, we always eat supper with the grown-ups, but Friday night is something special as there are white table cloths, flowers, and extra-special food, and everybody is dressed in his best clothes.....I keep getting off the subject, but there is so much to tell you that everything I mention reminds me of half a dozen other things.

Between 4:30 and supper, we usually play together, except in the winter when everything is wet and no one is allowed to tread on the lawns in order not to spoil them. In that case, I go to Shmuel's room, and if he is home, I help him to make coffee and toast because we both like coffee and toast. If he is not there because he is working late or has gone to visit one of his friends, then I make myself a drink and eat some bread or whatever else there is to eat in the room. When he comes back, we both listen to the radio or play on his two accordions. I cannot play very well, but I know a couple of songs and Shmuel accompanies me on the second accordion. The neighbors hate it! Shmuel's room is one of the nicest in the kibbutz because it is really one and a half rooms plus bathroom. I keep all my things in a cupboard in the small room, and Shmuel gets angry if I leave things lying about in the big room where he sleeps--which means that he gets angry very often, or pretends to anyhow. The only time he got really angry was when I forgot and stuck some chewing gum under the table.

He had just come back from work and it had been very hot and he was tired. When he drew out the table to set it for tea, he put his hand right on this lump of gum. I think he wanted to hit me. If he had, it would have been the first time, and I think now that I would have deserved it. But he didn't, so I got off with a very sharp lesson and a warning. He won't let me eat sunflower seeds in the room either because he hates to see the shells lying about like you do in buses and cinemas where everybody eats them.

I haven't told you about work yet. Well, we work for two months in the same branch and then we change around. Up to now, I have worked two months each in the orchards, vineyards, garage, chickens, and dining hall. As soon as I am old enough, I want to work with Shmuel in falcha (dry farming, wheat, hay, etc.--Shmuel) and drive tractors and also the station wagon. I already know how to drive most of the tractors, including the caterpillar crawler, and Shmuel has even let me drive the self-propelled combine harvester on which he always works at harvest time. He didn't even stay with me but stood below and directed me where to drive it. In the orchard and vineyard, we pick fruit, help with the sorting, collect cuttings, and sometimes make nuisances of ourselves, or so they tell us. In the garage, we clean up machinery parts and keep the storeroom in order and drive a tractor now and again. When we work with chickens, we collect eggs and clean them. In the dining hall, we set tables, bring in hot food, and serve to table, and also manage to get a lot of extra things like cakes and puddings on the quiet. The girls usually work in the children's houses where they help to clean up, feed the little kids, and take them out for walks. They are usually very glad to work there but you wouldn't catch me there, not for anything. Shmuel also works with children sometimes because he knows how to deal with them. He had so much experience with me when I was smaller. The kids also like it when he works there because he takes them for rides on one of the tractors or plays for them on the accordion. At one time, he used to work with our class. That was during the winter when there was no work in falcha. I remember that we made him very angry but did what he wanted us to do all the same. On Shabbat, the teachers and the matron and all the girls who work with the smaller children have a rest, and then all sorts of other chaverim--that is, members of the kibbutz--work in their stead. Every chaver works half a Shabbat once a month, either with children or in the kitchen and dining hall, or with the sheep or chickens, so that those who usually work there can have a day's rest.

I forgot to tell you that I also worked for two months with the sheep. We have four hundred sheep which give a lot of milk. In Israel, sheep give milk but their wool is very coarse, good only for making rugs and bed covers. I worked every afternoon from 5:30 until 7:30, and at the end of two months, I knew how to milk those sheep almost as well as the regular workers there. But I really didn't like to work there because sheep are the most smelly animals in the world and the most stupid ones as well. The only good thing about working there was that I could sometimes ride Kochevet (Starface--Shmuel) who is very quiet if she knows you and can gallop like the wind if it's in the direction of her stable. She's small, a bit fat, and has a white star on her forehead. Her parents were real Arab riding horses, so in spite of her being overweight, she can still gallop and has a temper as well.

After Shmuel and I have eaten supper, I go to my room and usually busy myself with my stamp collection till lights-out at 9:00. I have 3,000 stamps including most of the Israeli ones. Whenever a new Israeli stamp is issued, I receive one automatically as I am a member of the stamp service which is part of the postal service. It's a pity that Shmuel is not really interested in stamps. Whenever I show him one, he looks politely and grunts. But to tell the truth, I do exactly the same thing when he wants to explain something about music and composers. I like only songs, folk dances, and Arab music, while he likes songs as well but can't stand Arab music. He also listens a lot to serious music which bores me terribly. I know that there is, or was, someone called Mozart, and he knows that there's a 3-lira airmail stamp, but neither of us admits that we don't really care.

Once a week, there is a movie, and on Pesach, Rosh Hashana, at weddings, and whenever all the chaverim eat together at the same time, we join them. There is usually wine and especially good food, and afterwards everyone sings. We kids always have a competition as to who can drink the greatest possible number of glasses of wine without anybody's noticing. I win quite often but only because Shmuel turns a blind eye. He knows I don't get drunk but only pretend to (Sez you!--Shmuel.) There are lots of other occasions like the bringing in of First Fruit, Independence Day, Chanuka, etc., when all the kids from the age of about five either watch or actively participate.

Altogether, Kfar Hanasi has 120 children and 150 members. The children are of all ages from 14 days to 14 years. Every age group has its own house where they eat, play, learn, and sleep. At 5:00 in the afternoon, all the kids go to their parents' rooms and later the parents put them to bed. In my class, only two kids have parents in the kibbutz; the others have parents or relatives in town and they go to the room of the family which takes care of them while they are here. This is called "collective education," and it is the same in all kibbutzim. the idea is that the parents can both go to work, and when the kids come home in the afternoon, the parents can stay with them. We also have a vegetable garden and give the produce to the kitchen, and in return the kibbutz buys us soccer outfits, a phonograph, and so on. In addition, we are bringing up two lambs on scraps from our meals, and also have a puppy, and sometimes a cat. Once we had two cats, and both had kittens at the same time. The whole kibbutz was flooded with kittens and Shmuel took one of them home. It was as big as his fist and we fed it with a little bottle and nipple. It became very big and used to come when Shmuel whistled in a certain way. Actually it was not as friendly as cats usually are and when it did decide to jump onto Shmuel's lap, he always felt very flattered. Shmuel did--not the cat. I called him Zariz, which means active, and Shmuel just called him Puss, but he listened to neither of us.

One day, we found a lizard in the room, and when I wanted to drive it out, Shmuel said it was worthwhile keeping because he would catch all the flies which didn't die from DDT. He did, too. Sometimes we find a scorpion and then there is a great fuss because no one likes to get stung by a scorpion. It hurts terribly and if a small kid is stung, he may die from it. So we always have an exciting time till it has been squashed. Once we even found a half-poisonous snake but that one didn't last a minute. Anything else--spiders, beetles, or moths--we catch and put outside. We don't like to kill them.

In about three years' time, we will be called up to the Army. I am looking forward to that. I know how to shoot and so do the others, even the girls. After my two and a half years in the Army, I think I shall come back to Kfar Hanasi and ask to be accepted as a member. Of course, I know that I shall have to work hard and for long hours, because if the harvest has to be gathered or the wheat sown, then it has to be done quickly. But that is what I want to do unless I change my mind after I have finished with the Army. Shmuel says that it is too early to worry about that and that he will probably be a grandfather by proxy when I am twenty. By that, he means that I shall be married and have children. I think he would like that more than I will.

Sometimes I am very impatient to be twenty, and other times, I think that it would be better to stay fourteen all the time. What do you think?

PESACH IN KFAR BLUM

by Joey Criden

Sometimes it rains when Pesach comes around, and other years the weather is soft and one can walk from the dining room almost all the way home without stepping in the mud. But rain or shine, wet or dry, Pesach is Springtime, and even the desolate hills of Beshan are covered with fresh green. Every field is studded with red and white poppies, the lawns are shaggy again, and everyone is wide awake, ready for a happy holiday, ready for a new year of work, ready for a long, hot, sunny summer.

The "Chadar Haochel" (Dining-Hall) is closed, the curtains drawn. The builders have finished constructing a stage, the chaverim so talented have finished their job, and the walls of our dining room will have been decorated by now - a fantasy of color, branches of leaves, ambitious murals, humorous sketches. And the kitchen staff now is boss. We can hear the clattering of dishes inside; "Aruchat Arba" (four o'clock snack) is served outside, cold tea and bread and jelly sandwiches. Chaverim are home early, and the spirit of spring of Pesach is everywhere - joking and laughing. No one lingers.

From the showers there is singing - and today at least, there is hot water enough. The last tractorist, the last truck driver, the last teacher -- all park their charges and rush for home.

At 8 o'clock, the chaverim appear. Easter parade? Almost. Everyone in his very best. The chaverim are in white shirts and razor-edged slacks, shoes gleaming; the chaverot in new dresses, everybody a little self-conscious. Scraped chins reflect the gleam of polished sandals. Even the children are careful, for a little while, at least. 8th grade in new gabardine skirts or slacks, 2nd grade in new plaid shirts, Kindergarten in corduroys, wearing the first pair of pants with a belt, a real belt. The youngest are asleep, but even they have had their inning, with sparkling new dresses, and lovely sashes, and knitted sweaters.

People converge on the main path to the dining room -- kibbitz a bit, laugh a lot, and surge into the dining room with oh and ah, as the doors open promptly at 8:30. The visitors are impressed, the chaverim are impressed, everybody is impressed.

At 9, the program begins. The vases of flowers are moved to permit all to see the stage -- the "Mazkir" (Secretary) greets the chaverim and guests with commendable brevity (as if he would be permitted to make a speech) and the choir gathers to the chorus of chair scraping and laughter. Three songs, with the children's choir taking an active part, and more than one case of Papa and Mama and two offspring each doing a part in a Bach chorale. That finished, the "Hagada" is opened.

No ordinary "Hagada" this. It is the end-point of months of careful composition, using tradition as a basis - the fruit of many hours of drawing - each word hand printed, the illustrations, a synthesis of old and new.

The "Hagada" is read aloud - each section by another chaver - and all interspersed with choir recitals or recitations, or with the singing of the entire kibbutz. The Four Questions asked by four youngsters -- bashful but efficient. The "Hagada" ends with the annual blessing, "Next year in a flourishing Kfar Blum, in a flourishing Israel!" And then the food is on the agenda.

The chaverot do a magnificent job. Lush salad, Frieda's spiced fish, roast chicken, and all the fixings. The crunching of "matza" sounds like a forest fire.

Afterwards, the tables are cleared away, the dancing begins - first, a large Hora, with everybody in. Then, the old-timers drop out to let the youth get rid of some of its undisciplined energy. The kids dash about in a floor-breaking dance, but tire easily, and the veterans resume their positions - a slow, smooth Hora, tied to one chant. "Mi yivneh Hagalil - anu nivneh Hagalil!" And it goes on and on; the shirts are wet as soup. An hour or two - and in one corner or another, the group which has done this job for a decade begins to sing - the old Kfar Blum songs, in the old Kfar Blum ways. No rehearsal needed. Moshe takes the proper harmony, and Nechemiah comes in with the self-same boom-boom in precisely the same way. Rested, they begin to dance again - Chaim out with his accordian, the couple dances, the new dances learned this year, the Polka and Schottische. Shirts have been changed, the floor swept again, the children are in bed, the frail sit on the sidelines. Another bottle of wine is unhidden; the singing and dancing go on all night.

The rest of the week is merry too. There is a full program of concerts, a play, a special performance by the children, a "tiyul" (by truck--to Jerusalem, or Elath, or some such) culminating in a hilarious third seder, where the comedians are king and all is fun.

Such is Pesach in Kfar Blum.

A VISIT TO GESHER HAZIV -

AN ANNIVERSARY

by Temy

I was peacefully reading the evening newspaper and Nachman was writing a letter, when Margalit, my next-door neighbor burst into the room.

"Do you know what day this is?" she said in great excitement.

I looked up at the masthead of the newspaper and read--January 27, 1953. Could I have forgotten? It was the birthday of Gesher Haziv!

"When will the Kibbutz celebration take place?" I asked Nachman. (He's in the dramatic group which is presenting a play for the occasion.)

"Well, the play isn't in good shape yet, so the anniversary celebration will have to be postponed for about two weeks," said Nachman.

Meanwhile, Amnon, Margalit's husband, had overheard our conversation and had come in.

"You know," he said, "Anniversaries ought to be celebrated on time, otherwise the significance of the occasion becomes lessened."

"Let's have a little celebration of our own," Margalit suggested.

"How about reminiscing over some coffee and bread and jam?" I said.

So we did, each telling by turn of some high point in the history of Gesher Haziv. Inevitably, each would interrupt and add to what the other said because the memories called up a lot of associations.

We spent a pleasant evening and although not all the past events we brought to mind would make interesting reading, I thought that perhaps the readers of HABONEH would be interested in the most memorable of these.

Trying to keep things in chronological order, first, there was "Yom Hityashvut," the day we came here four years ago. It was raining, but despite the weather, several hundred people came from all parts of the country to celebrate with us.

Before the work of putting up "Tzrifim" and "Ohalim" began, there was a short opening ceremony. It consisted of speeches out in the drizzling rain. Matty's drawings of prophet and chalutz were nailed to wooden props. They served as backdrops for the speakers and they, too, stood the weathering well.

In the middle of this dedication ceremony, we suddenly heard a deafening roar. A plane was circling overhead. It dived precariously low, and then we saw the pilot drop a toy parachute in our midst. It was Moshe Hirsch, one-time Shaliach to Habonim and then pilot in the Israel Air Force. Attached to the little parachute was a note expressing his best wishes for our success.

Our first anniversary was one of exhibitions; the best of our fruits and vegetables, children's drawings, clothes made by the "Machsan," charts and diagrams showing our progress in the many branches of work.

The best exhibit was a model Kibbutz, built to scale, and showing Gesher Haziv in ten years. It was set up on an unfinished floor of a new "Tzrif" being built then. The whole futurama was encircled by an overhead ramp from which one could look down and view the entire spectacle.

The second and third anniversaries were marked by two marionette shows with elaborate scenery and costumes. A lot of excellent technical work went into making these productions a success. One was based on a story by Peretz, and the second was an original fairy tale written by one of the members.

After reminiscing a bit about each anniversary celebration, we began to match anecdotes. Among others, we recalled the time one of our tractorists came home late from work one evening and began driving the tractor into the garage. Suddenly, he jammed on the brakes as his headlights flashed onto what seemed like a pair of horns. They were rising slowly from the grease pit. He got down and cautiously edged over to the side of the pit. A pair of eyes as frightened as his own, looked up at him from the pit. It was one of the cows which had wandered away and fallen in. How she was coaxed to walk up a plank in order to get out is another story in itself.

Then someone mentioned the winter of two years ago with its heavy rains. The Nahariya "Ma'abara" (transit camp for new Olim) was flooded and we took in about thirty Olim, housed and fed them until the flood subsided.

We spoke of these things and many others until very late in the evening. But now that it comes time to bring these tales of Gesher Haziv to a close, I want to tell you what about our Kibbutz really keeps us here. It is not the tempo of our building or the development of our agricultural and industrial branches or even the thought and devotion which goes into caring for our children. All these are important but upon clarifying to myself what is the one thing which really stands out, I would say, readers of HABONEH, that it's the beauty of this place called Gesher Haziv.

Imagine if you can, rolling hills on your left. At their base, they are guarded by upright cypress trees. Gradually, the green and brown checkered fields become a gray as the eye ascends. These are rocks. The drab gray is livened by clusters of trees and buildings, our neighboring settlements--Chanita, Metzuba, Alon, Yechiam, Cabri. The newest of the settlements gleam the brightest in the sun. These are the tin roofs of the "ma'abarot."

On your right, almost within reach, is the Mediterranean, with its color changing according to the moods of the sky. On the beach stand the remnants of the Arab village, Achziv. What stands out from a distance are a white dome and tall date palms, symbols of the past, and further south along the beach, in direct contrast, stands a modern textile factory, and a little further, the huge steel skeleton of a new asbestos factory.

To the south, lies the resort town of Nahariya. All we see of it from here is the typical water tower topped by a Menora.

Our view of Haifa's Mt. Carmel is excellent, especially at night, when the twinkling lights almost become a part of the solar system.

To the north, the white, wave-washed and sun-bleached cliff of Rosh Hanikra juts out. This marks the border between Israel and Lebanon.

Well, before I get too sentimental, let me stop and invite you to come and see for yourself all the things you have been reading about. I promise to show you around.

THE LAMENT OF A DRIVER

Dov

If you were to ask me who is the real chalutz in the kibbutz, I would answer unhesitatingly, I. Not because it's I, you understand, but because of my profession.

I'm a miserable lorry driver, which means that I am even worse off than a prophet in his own country (also a bad business to get into). My comrades tell me that since I became a driver I am no longer a "Ben-adam" (a human being). They are kind. They say that I can't help it (these are the nice ones, the tolerant ones); they say that it's my job and that it isn't my fault if I haven't got the strength of character to withstand the demoralizing effect of driving a ten-ton truck.

Even my friends say that I've changed somehow since I became a driver. They say that I've developed the mentality of a weather reporter, that they can't get a straight anser from me. I can see that there is no pleasing some folks. On my first trip I told them that I'd be leaving at 7 a.m. I must have got stage fright, because something went wrong, and I didn't leave till noon. As a result of course, the treasurer and the purchasing agent and the member who works in the Kibbutz Hameuchad offices in town, and the young woman in charge of the clothes store who had planned on a day of shopping and half a dozen comrades taking their annual vacation all missed their bus, and who suffered? I give you three guesses.

Can you blame me then if I always qualify my answer when somebody asks me what time I am going out? I always reply, "I'll be leaving at 7 a.m. if I don't leave earlier", which I think is a reasonable answer. But they say that I am bent on ruining their nerves, deliberately making them lie awake all night for fear I should suddenly drive off without them.

Then, if I stay outside on a long-distance job, they say that I am having the time of my life, that I took the job to get a break from the kibbutz. On the other hand, if I get home every night, they say I've got a cinch of a job.

"The luck of a driver", they say. "If you were working in grain crops you would only get home every few months", and the Housing Committee is annoyed because it has to find me a bed.

The Exploited Sabbath:

And if I am at home on Shabbat, the Work Co-ordinator or the Farm Manager (these gentle souls differ little in technique from each other) will trap me in the dining-room, and with a mighty paralyzing thump on my shoulder to show what an old friend he is, he will say "Yiddel, I need your truck for fifteen minutes" (he has worked it out). "Just a little job, he mumbles, adding something about a few sacks. "Of course, I don't want to drag you out on your Shabbat, so I will get Shmerel to drive it".

The cunning hound knows that I wouldn't let anybody touch my old truck, especially that three-thumbed imbecile, Shmerel.

He sees me hesitating and thrusts home with the ever-reliable, "Of course, you can refuse. After all, you are the driver (I hadn't denied it) and you work for the co-op (the regional Transport Cooperative) really, not for us. The cattle can do without their food for one day, and Tnuva won't mind if we deliver less milk tomorrow, and it will only put us one day behind in our building programme...."

"Did you say only a few sacks?" I begin. "It looks as though an awful lot depends on those few sacks...".

"Well, it's like this,.....".

Like clay in the hands of the potter, that's me in the hands of the Farm Manager.

It was almost dark before we finished that evening. The lights of the dining room shone bright and friendly in the dusk. A good comrade on his way to supper passed by as I was putting the finishing touches to the truck before garaging it for the night.

"Why Yiddel," he cried, "Why don't you and that old truck get married? You can't keep away from one another, can you, even on your Shabbat!".

I shall always claim that as one of my finest moments. I straightened my weary back and just smiled, friendly like, and said not a word.

Then there is that perennial question, how many passengers is one allowed to take in the back of a lorry? (The Law says two, but the Law forgets that every Sunday morning the Exodus repeats itself in our Kibbutz. So I got a few "Reports" (Hebrew for summonses) from the local cop. Whereupon I resolved: NO MORE REPORTS! So once again, I have ceased to be a "ben-adam".

Where I came from, a northern town with a wild Irish Catholic population, policemen were extremely unpopular, and they were written off once and for all in the saying, "Once a policeman, never a man". The version in our village seems to be "Once a driver, never a 'ben-adam'". Just because I refused to submit to mass pressure, i.e. because I was protecting the people from themselves!

That Horror, the Outing:

Then there is that bane of every kibbutz lorry driver, The Outing. Every now and again, somebody (either a Responsible Comrade or a Rather Browned-Off Comrade, according to your philosophy) will get up in the general meeting and make a speech, as follows: "We who are building the Galil, reclaiming the land, reshaping our lives, we know less about the country than visitors. How do we expect to become rooted, etc. in our own land if.....".

Enough, enough, everyone knows the rest. An outing is called for. It means using the lorry for one whole day, not an inexpensive business, since a working day for the lorry is worth at least LI.30, but Public Feeling has been aroused! Even the treasurer, a hard case if ever there was one, can't withstand it; as for a mere driver....

Yes, as for me, I would sooner drive a herd of wild elephants across Tel Aviv than take the group for an outing. First of all, I am driven crazy hours before we start by the afraid-of-being-laters. "When do we start?" Then there are the always-laters. No matter what time we are due to pull out, X can always be relied upon to rush up at the last second to tell us that his wife has decided to go after all, and she will be "ready in a minute".

But my greatest fear is of the solid mass of humanity packed inside the truck. They crowd in until the ladders are bulging. If I protest and tell them that it is dangerous to travel like that, and that in any case I have no license to carry such a mob, I am greeted with, "It's all right for you. You've been everywhere and seen all there is to see. Only a driver would begrudge his comrades the chance of seeing a bit of the country."

I escape to my cabin, while they continue with their miracles of loading; packing hefty men into six inches of space apiece, and austerity specimens where there is no space at all.

Then I hear the inevitable, "Yiddel, two comrades who are not supposed to stand will have to travel with you in the cabin". My heart sinks.

"There is only room for one in the cabin besides the driver", I reply coldly. Then, thinking aloud (one of my sinister habits), "If they are not supposed to stand, why do they come on a trip like this, which is going to be as good as any Commando training course?"

I had thought too loudly, as simple people often do.

"How can you be so heartless! Would you deny these poor comrades the chance of seeing our beloved Galil?"

The appeal is touching. One would have thought this was their last day on earth. "Alright", I say, "have it your own way". They hoist the two comrades into the cabin. The one nearest me somehow gets entangled in the brakes and the lorry suddenly begins to move back down the slope. I manage to extricate her and stop the lorry.

"Somebody will have to travel with his feet stuck out of the window", I announce grimly", and it isn't going to be me. I'm not used to driving in that position. Besides, its against the rules".

Using superhuman self-control, the unfortunate one manages to withhold herself a hair's breadth away from the gears. "We'll manage", she says, "I can remain in this position without interfering with you".

"Yes, I retort, "if you were a Yogi, you might succeed".

We are interrupted by cries from the back of the lorry. "Nu, what's all the busykeit? Got a puncture again, Yiddel? Get a move on, we've wasted enough time. Trust old Yiddel to...about at the last moment".

I count up to ten (my mother taught me this; she said it would always keep me out of trouble), and then another ten...and say nothing. Another of my finest moments.

No good driver ever starts off without a last glance at his load, but this time I refrain. I release the brakes gently, and the truck moves forward.

The rest is silence. Sufficient has been said to indicate why I am not enamoured of kibbutz outings. Maybe I have also told you enough to demonstrate the truth of my opening sentence.

A VISIT TO GESHER HAZIV -

THE BET SEFER

by Temy

It had not been too easy for me to get started on this visit. Finally, I hit on the idea of interviewing the kids themselves for material. Well, not only did I get lots of information, but I learned a great deal that I didn't know myself about our school in Gesher Haziv--the "Bet Sefer."

"Tell them about the way we learn--by projects." This the kids suggested should come first, so that's how I'll start.

Learning by projects is very popular in the Kibbutz and also in many schools in America. How does it work? The kids told me all about one of their favorite projects. It was on the clock. History, geography, arithmetic, were all learned in connection with the clock.

This project lasted more than a month the kids told me. In the course of that time, they learned to tell time, talked about clocks used in the past, such as the hour-glass, sun-dial, and rooster. I looked surprised when I heard this last mentioned. What a strange time-piece! "The rooster is like an alarm clock in the morning," said Hadas with a twinkle in her eye.

"The best part is making things," Yael said. "We made up a poem about donating used old clocks to the school. We hung it up on the dining-room bulletin board, and it got results. We had lots of fun taking the clocks apart and seeing what made 'em tick. Of course, we never fixed one to run again, but it was exciting. Especially when we mistook the watch jewels for rubies!"

Cardboard clocks with moveable hands were made by each kid. Toward the end of the project, a stick was planted upright in the ground. At noon, no shadow was cast. As the afternoon grew longer, so did the shadow cast by the stick onto the ground. By the end of the project, the kids could nearly tell the correct time by glancing at the length of the shadow cast on the ground.

The other projects were "Water," "Building," "Flowers." Then there were special subjects like Chaim Nachman Bialik. A whole month was devoted to reading, learning and illustrating his poems. Of course, other subjects like arithmetic and Bible are studied all year round, apart from the projects. In fact, by the time the kids will complete public-school, they will have read most of the Bible!

"Don't forget to mention another way we learn the geography and history of the country-hikes. Two years ago, we climbed to the peak of the Atzmon mountain," they told me. "Not only that, but most of us were only seven years old then, and we walked 10 kilometers in two hours. We thought that was pretty good for kids our age. Since then, we've seen lots more of the country. In May, we visited Geva, and at the same time, a class of Geva children came to Gesher Haziv. This summer, the truck took us to Kfar Giladi, and we hiked all around the Upper Galilee for a week. Once we went sailing in Haifa harbor, and..."

"Do Habonim in America hike a lot?" someone interrupted. I tried to explain that they do hike sometimes in the course of the school year, but mostly in Camp Kvutza, during summer vacation.

"Our vacation is different. Then we usually go to visit the city with our parents for a week or so. The rest of the time, we're free. This summer we all worked two hours a day in the different branches of work on the Kibbutz."

"Do you think Habonim would be interested in facts and figures about our school?" I wasn't sure, but I decided to include some figures anyway, just to compare.

There are seven children in the first grade. Third and fourth grade are combined, and that totals nine kids in all. One thirteen-year-old studies in another Kibbutz. He is Eytan, the son of a former "Shaliach" to America, Aharon Engel. Eytan studies in Geva, and Billy Goldfarb (whom you remember as a former "Mazkir" of American Habonim, and contributor to HABONEH) is one of his teachers. This month, Eytan will be celebrating his Bar Mitzvah in Gesher Haziv.

To fill in our younger classes, we are accepting eight children from the city whose parents want them to study in the Kibbutz.

"Do the Habonim know that we eat all our meals in school? We help with the dishes and the house-cleaning. In fact, we used to sleep in a special section of the school building, too. But that was before the new houses were built. Now each house has an extra room and we sleep in our parents' house, just like city kids. (Some of us would like to go back to the old arrangement. We had lots of fun together. However, I think the parents prefer having us right next door to them.)"

After lunch, each kid goes to his room to rest. Before supper, twice a week, there are lessons in playing the "Chalil," a primitive, flute-like instrument, which everybody in Israel seems to play. The rest of the week, during the before-supper period, the kids work on their homework. This leaves them free to spend the evening with their parents and younger brothers and sisters.

Teacher is a close friend of each of her pupils. She is a "chavera" of Gesher Haziv, and is called by her first name. After school hours, she helps those who need her. She is very much one of the gang, but at the same time, greatly respected and looked up to.

With teacher's help, the kids play a large part in holiday preparations, be it preparing the First Fruits at Shavuot, dancing at Rosh Hashana, acting in a Purim play, or reading the Pesach Haggadah.

On April Fool's day last year, the kids thought up this practical joke by themselves. They substituted a reddish mud for the fish-paste of the same color in the jars on the supper table. You can imagine what happened. However, there were no hard feelings. It was a clever joke and all laughed.

The kids didn't tell me to include that they are quite modest. The other day, they spotted some burning brush. Several raced to the dining-room, others alerted chaverim in other places, and together we quenched the flames before any serious damage was caused.

"Tell them about our pets." So I promised to write a few extra lines about the chickens, rabbits, and lamb which the kids raise. They also look after a vegetable garden of their own. This means quite a few chores for the kids to attend to in the morning before classes start, but they don't seem to mind.

The kids asked me to remind the readers of HABONEH that they are very anxious to hear from kids in America. A list of the Gesher Haziv school children who want pen-pals from American Habonim appeared in the October issue of HABONEH. If you readers of HABONEH want to know more about our school at Gesher Haziv, why don't you just sit down and drop a line to the kids at Gesher Haziv.

A VISIT TO GESHER HAZIV -

THE SANDLARIYA

The "Sandlariya" is (well, you can almost guess it; the word is so close to "sandal") a shoe-repair shop. Every Kibbutz, and Gesher Haziv, too, has one of its own. In outward appearance the "Sandlariya" comes close to your neighborhood shoe-shop, but the similarity ends right there.

We wear out a great deal of shoe leather in the sands of Gesher Haziv. We keep Itzik, our "Sandlar" (that, of course, means "shoe-maker"), very busy. Our "Sandlariya" squats atop a hill. It is housed in a sort of Quonset hut with concrete walls and a rounded tin roof. The walls were once part of a building which housed a British Army headquarters. This was in the days before 1948 when Gesher Haziv served as a British Army camp.

The "Sandlariya" overlooks the main road, dining-room and laundry. However, Itzik the "Sandlar" has no time to observe the goings-on in around these busy places. There is so much of interest taking place in the "Sandlariya" itself.

You see, being "Sandlar" is only his side-line. Itzik happens to be the Kibbutz Orson Welles. He is actor, writer, director, producer, and even stage-builder. The "Sandlariya" has become our cultural and dramatic center. Within its walls have taken place rehearsals of Peretz, Sholem Aleichem and Biblical plays, as well as original works. The layers of shoes, work-table and machines don't seem one bit out of place, no matter what the play.

The "Sandlariya" is also the home of our famed marionettes, made by Matty Korostoff Shuval, formerly from Philadelphia Habonim. (The drawings on these pages are by Mat, too.) The marionettes are the delight of young and old alike. It has become a tradition for the Kibbutz dramatic group to present a marionette show every January for the anniversary of Gesher Haziv. Last year we featured "Yom Shishe Hakatzer" ("The Foreshortened Friday") by Peretz. Its most distinguishing features were a snowfall and a horse which clippety-clopped most convincingly. This past year an original fairy-tale was written by one of the members, starring a sorcerer. He bewitched the audience with such amazing feats as causing a snake to slither out of a silver box, and commanding a broom to dance. Another high-light of the performance was the beautiful princess playing on a miniature harp. Our marionette troupe is famous in the whole region and has performed from Nahariya to Kibbutz Alon.

The marionettes are a charming set. The Kibbutz kids come around regularly to see if the dolls are still hanging in the "Sandlariya". Sure enough, they are waiting in full dress, ready for new roles in next year's performance. Besides the marionettes, there are all sorts of fascinating items in the "Sandlariya" for the children, like cans of shoe polish and bunches of shoe laces, nails and hammers and cobbler's knives. The low work-table, containing all these items, is a source of never-ending fascination for the children.

Itzik sits on a bench, work-board on his knees. As he hammers away, he sings a tune to himself. Occasionally Itzik catches a kid playing with one of his work-knives.

"Mazik (Little Devil)!" he bellows. He scares no one, for isn't Itzik an actor with the whole "Sandlariya" for his stage? A Chaver may come in and ask for a pair of shoes brought in the week before.

"Sure, sure, sure. . ." sings out Itzik, and starts combing through boxes and piles of shoes. He usually finds them, sometimes repaired, and sometimes not. If the latter is the case he will say:

"Sit down for a minute and let's have a chat. I'll finish them . . . 'Chish maher' (in no time at all)."

Itzik not only repairs shoes; he used to make shoes as well. Now it is difficult to obtain leathers, so most of our shoes are "store-bought". In the winter the kids wear high leather shoes. They are best for foot support in the sand (with which Gesher Haziv is abundantly blessed). In the summer you want to keep the sand out too, but it's too hot for high shoes. What to do? Simple enough. The kids wear open sandals which allow the incoming sand to slide out. Better still, the kids love to go without shoes in the summer. They are real proud when they are able to prance over rocks and thorns barefoot, in true country style.

Nevertheless, even with leather shortages and the barefoot summers, Itzik is kept busy with repairs. Even if there weren't repairs, there is so much of interest in the "Sandlariya" that people are always dropping in. Itzik himself is the attraction. He is the best of actors, and the "Sandlariya" is the best of theaters.

WATCHMAN! WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

Dov Kron

They told me I was to go on Night Watch. The picture springs to mind immediately of the romantic age of Hashomer, picturesque watchmen armed to the teeth, mounted on a fiery Arab steed, guarding some lonely settlement in the Galil....

Now that the Arabs have left the area, the duties of a guard in our Hadera home are more prosaic than they were in the old days, when we expected a band of Arabs to burst out at any moment from the surrounding citrus orchards which provide excellent shelter for would be marauders. Nevertheless, as I was to discover, the job was not without its measure of suspense and tension.

I approached the chaver whom I was replacing and asked him for a list of my duties.

"First of all", he began, "you look in at the children every hour".

"Right, I look in at the children every hour".

"Then you...."

"Wait a minute", I began apprehensively, "what do I do when I look in at the children?".

"Why you see if they're alright of course. If they're uncovered then cover them. Some of them get into awkward positions while they're sleeping. If you think they're lying badly, then fix them, see?".

"I see. If they're lying badly then fix them. Yes...er, of course".

"Do you have to repeat everything I say?" He seemed to be getting impatient.

"It helps me to remember".

"Right. You look.....".

"Yes, yes, I know".

"Then at three o'clock you feed the mule, take down the children's washing which has been drying in the dining room, light the primus stoves in the kitchen and put them under the dixies...then...and then...and when you've got time, have a good look around the machaneh. They say there are Arabs knocking round, thieving where they can...".

"I see". Besides the details he had given me I also had a list of people whom I had to waken.

Armed with a sten-gun which I hoped I wouldn't have to use - I had been told that this particular sten was a rather tempermental weapon and it was never certain which way the bullets would come out - I started watch with a stroll around the camp. Fortunately, it had stopped raining, but the ground was covered with mud and pools of water. The moon had not risen yet and the night was dark - but dark! The pools were invisible and all my attention became concentrated on avoiding them. I found a dry spot amongst the trees and stood there while listening. I had given up trying to pierce the darkness with my eyes. I would watch with my ears. A fruitless task. The noises of the night beat upon my ears. What a

pandemonium! Jackals were howling, shrill, almost human, bloodcurdling; frogs were croaking and the birds were crying and whistling and talking to one another. Listen. Was that rustle caused by a human intruder or was it just some wild creature creeping through the undergrowth? A loud thumping from the direction of the stable, then the rattling of chains. That would be the old mule. I went along to make sure. He greeted me with a low pleasant whinnying. No, not yet, old boy, it's not three o'clock yet!

I turn back and pay my first visit to the children's house. I switched on the light in the corridor and opened the first door. There were four cots in the room. Their inmates were sound asleep. Were these the little rascals who were so active and obstreperous during the day? They looked so peaceful and innocent! How many were there? One...two...three....What about the fourth cot? Was it unoccupied? There was no little head peeping over the bedclothes. I tiptoed nearer and heard a soft breathing. Good heavens! This kid will suffocate himself, I thought in my ignorance. I gently pulled back the blanket and exposed a little blonde head. Suddenly a tiny hand stretched out and pulled the blanket back over his head. Well, what do you know! I drew the blanket back again. He began to murmur and I was afraid he would wake up. What does one do on such occasions?

"Sh...sh...". I kept on shushing for a while and it seemed effective. I crept softly towards the door and took one last look around the room before leaving. Only three heads were visible!

I gave it up - "for the time being", I told myself, knowing that I was beaten. Other urgent appointments awaited me. The children next door were younger and required more attention (I was already an expert!).

I opened the next door. One...two....Allah be praised! There were four heads showing! Hmm...they seemed alright. Get out quickly before something happens. Steady now, steady! Losing your grip so soon? What about that one in the corner? Only the top of his head is showing. Is that enough for breathing? Why not? It's a cold night, and they snuggle under the blankets. Alright - we'll leave them to their dreams.

I passed on to the next room. Five slightly older children were sleeping there. All in order except for one little fellow who evidently didn't like sleeping in the vertical position. He was stretched across the width of the cot, his head pressed against the railings. Come up, lad! Straighten up there! I tried to move him round without waking him. What a hope! It was a trickier operation than I had thought and the blanket and sheets and the youngster all became entangled and he woke up crying "Abba!"

His crying aroused the other children and the room resounded with cries of "Abba! Abba! ...". I was on the verge of running for reinforcements but rejected the idea as cowardly. I straightened out the bedclothes, covered up the squalling infant and then tried to sing them to sleep. I couldn't for the life of me think of a lullaby so I started with the "Volga Boatman" following it up with "Baa menucha!". But this seemed to rouse them to greater efforts so I turned tail and fled.

I walked round the machaneh once more to cool off. I preferred to face marauding Arabs than that Children's House again!

Three o'clock. Time to feel the mule. I filled a bucket of water. Although I was quite a distance away from the stable he had already sensed my coming. I heard his welcoming neigh.

"Don't you ever sleep, you old beggar?". Evidently not. You could never catch him out! Several times through the night I had stolen up quietly in what I thought professional commando fashion and he had made me feel an amateur by greeting me long before I'd reached the stable. Feeding an animal ranks among the major pleasures in life (next to feeding oneself!). Their appreciation is so evident. With what gusto he attacks the meal. And the symphony which accompanies his eating! I kept him company for a while and then continued my round.

Suddenly, I heard a sound from the Children's House. I hastened there. A child was crying. It is terrible to hear a child crying in the night. It "goes through you". I entered the room. There she was, poor little mite, crying bitterly. Three weeks old, tiny and delicate. I felt helpless and tried the "sh...sh..." business. I shished and shushed but it didn't help. I began to sweat. Sh... Sh...I couldn't make out what was wrong with her. There was nothing for it but to call the girl who was on the morning shift. In any case it was almost time to wake her - (well, only another hour!).

She brushed past me into the room with an expression on her face which I shall long remember! She bent over the cot for a second and announced: "It's wet!". Then she headed for the door.

"Er...wait a minute", I said, "Are you in a hurry?".

"You'd better change it you xxyz! "

"Never! I cried, and bolted past her through the doorway into the darkness,- the friendly, comforting darkness.

Back to work again. We are in an interesting part of the field now. With every potato, I pick up a scorpion, a spider or a centipede. I suddenly feel a terrible thirst - I walk to the other end of the field, and take a slow drawn out, copious draught of water. It is not good to drink quickly. I rinse my mouth and throat thoroughly. I walk conscientiously back to my furrow... no luck, no one has finished it for me. I go to the heap of sacks to empty my pails - I arrange the sacks neatly, discover and remove the irritating stone from my left shoe, but all to no avail - my potatoes still wait for me. I handle each potato as if it were the emerald eye of some great Buddha, and I listen to my fellow-workers singing, and my thoughts are acid.

Now the day is going better. I have discovered the rhythm of potato picking. I sing with the rest of them. I take joy in my work. I am a farmer now, an agriculturist rather - ablemuscled soul of the soil. I rise, take two heavy pails, and walk jauntily to the sacks, thinking of crops and manure, and markets, and that next time I will only take one pail. The boy at the sacks is muttering something. "Someone keeps picking the empty mother seed potatoes" he says. "Erased be his name, can't tell the difference between a potato and a worn-out seed." "Where are you going with that second pail" he asks me. "It is not entirely filled yet" I answer and deflated, I empty it behind a rock.

It is almost sunset now. The wagon has come to take the sacks home. The girls climb on the wagon but the boys walk. The wagoner, my good friend Aryeh, says "Come Yossel, room for you too". "Of course not, I'd rather walk", and curse my hypocrisy and my aching feet.

After a shower, I sit down at the table - and am given a plate of potatoes. But they have a different taste tonight. They are delicious. Each potato has a personality - they are salted by the sweat of my toil (washed before cooking), I eat and eat, and discuss the potatoes quite professionally - classify each spud according to size and shape and eat more. A cigarette now - a look at the bulletin board - thank heavens, no meeting tonight, for although I no longer get stiff and sore, I get plenty tired - and so to bed.

They learned to find their way about in every corner of the kibbutz, even on the darkest night, to write and deliver a message properly, to identify stars, and make their way by them. During the three-month period, the children lived in a high state of tension, accentuated by the necessity for continuing normal studies. Finally, the B'nei Mitzva participated in the preparations for the program which the entire class presented on the night of nights. This included a Hebrew play, a skit in English, dances, choral music, and craft work.

The parents, in the meantime, were also kept busy, meeting with the teachers, helping the children, making lists of guests, and refurnishing their houses.

Bar Mitzva week was launched with a military ceremony. As Kfar Blum is on the Syrian border, everyone is assigned a role in its defense. A number of the senior members of the kibbutz marched off one dark evening with the new "soldiers" in their midst. The youngsters stepped forward as the section reached its position. The officer in charge asked them, "What are your qualifications for joining the ranks of the defense forces of the colony?" The Thirteen-year-olds related what they studied. Their instructor affirmed that they are responsible and competent. The officer then decreed: "Uri, Semadar, having been trained and found suitable, you are hereby added to the rolls of Kfar Blum's defenders. You are assigned to Section X Block Y as runner" (or telephone operator or observer). Suitable congratulations were lavished upon the children. Three shots were fired into the air, and Uri and Semadar marched back to the kibbutz, singing with the rest.

The second evening was devoted to the Noar Oved--the League of Working Youth. The older children, all dressed in blue shirts, formed a square. Flags were marched in as all stood to attention. The "candidate" was asked to recite the pledge. The local youth leader (one of our older sons) welcomed the new member and pinned the emblem of the movement on his breast pocket. He was invited to sign the roll of members--and then to light the campfire. "Hatikva" was sung as the blaze illuminated the eager young faces. Then the parents were invited to leave, and the children gathered around the fire to consume goodies, soft drinks, corn, and fruit. The youngsters enjoyed their kumsitz until the wee hours, They sang, told stories, roasted potatoes and weenies.

And finally--Friday. The kibbutz was full of a holiday air. There was a rushing about in the dining room as decorations were arranged. (In the summer, the entire ceremony is carried out on one of the big lawns.) The kitchen was full of good smells of thousands of cookies and dozens of cakes and shtrudels, of roast chicken, of coffee.

This night, the entire kibbutz ate together, and the dining hall was closed until the appointed hour. The ceremony at the dining table was short since the main program was scheduled for a later hour, when the younger children are asleep. Before dinner, the Shabbat candles were lit by the B'nei Mitzva; the assemblage--members, children, and guests--drank a toast, proffered by one of the resident grandfathers of the kibbutz, to the B'nei Mitzva and to Shabbat HaMalka.

The party began at about 9:30. The entire kibbutz was present, as were all the guests. The children were seated at a table, suitably dressed, facing the audience. The evening was opened by the teacher of the class

who served as chairman for the occasion. She introduced the children and made a short speech of congratulation. She then unrolled a parchment scroll, one for each child. The scroll, printed by one of the older boys, described the thirteen "mitzvot" executed by the principals of the evening.

As she read each "mitzva," Uri and Semadar got up and described the work they did. The children were also permitted to read short selections from their written works. They were required to relate, in an impromptu manner, the trials and successes, preparations and experiences that went into the execution of the "mitzvot." This part of the program is the "serious" part, and is, for the child, no simple task. As his father before him, he is expected to stand before an assembly of people of all ages, many of them unfamiliar to him, and display his knowledge and understanding--both orally and by reading from the written word.

The scroll was rerolled, the teacher said a few words, adding her comments to the work done, and then called upon the parents of the children to present their gifts. This traditionally, is a beautifully bound edition of the Tanach. The father is the one who usually presents it. Often, Papa is quite choked up with emotion and finds it very difficult to make his modest speech which is generally a quotation or reading from the Bible.

Then the secretary of the kibbutz was called. His gift, the gift of the kibbutz, was a wristwatch. And he presented it with a few words about the responsibility of the new "adult" in our communal society. He was followed by a representative of the class, who gave each child an album containing pictures of his classmates and the written congratulations of each one of them. After him, the young leader gave his own blessing and that of the Noar Oved, and a book. This ended the official, or solemn, part of the ceremony. During the interval, hands were shaken, and cakes and cookies, beer and wine, orange juice, fruits and candies distributed on long flower-bedecked tables.

The short refreshing interlude was followed by the program prepared and presented by the class. The funny skits depicted events in the life of the class, and there is always a playlet in English for the American relatives. The choir and the dance group performed. And then, the dancing and singing began and continued until the late, late hours.

Saturday was a day for the grown-ups. A holiday atmosphere reigned in the entire kibbutz, and guests from neighboring colonies arrived to drink "l'chayim." The family set an overburdened table and everybody and his aunt came to join in the feast. During the entire day, there was a constant commotion. In the evening, the more intimate friends of the family came to spend an hour or two. The old songs were brought out and the younger people stood aside and admired their parents as the vodka and punch began to have effect.

And so ended the Bar Mitzva celebration, after a last party where teachers and children were the guests. The house finally cleaned up, all is now in the past--fondly embedded in the memory of the Bar Mitzva, as the watch is wound up each morning.

THE NEW "OLEH" AND THE SHOVEL

by Dave Biderman

The first days in the kibbutz are very pleasant for the newcomer but he does not really appreciate them. How can he appreciate what a really good cup of coffee means--with sugar in it, too--unless he has drunk kibbutz coffee for a few months? How can he appreciate a good cigarette when he hasn't smoked the ragweed called Latif issued to kibbutzniks? But then, he is a new arrival so he doesn't appreciate anything.

Yes, my first days were very pleasant; I wish I could start afresh every two months. On arrival, everyone is concerned about your welfare--how was the trip--take it easy--look the place over, etc. At night, there is a kumsitz and the above-mentioned coffee and cigarettes are mysteriously produced. Sometimes the newcomer brings a fresh supply which makes him doubly welcome. When I mentioned work I was told, "What's your hurry? You have the rest of your life to work!" Put in this manner, it did sound quite overpowering. But after you have been here for a few days you begin to feel uncomfortable and you think that everyone is staring at you and wondering, "What's the matter with him? Has he got a permanent Shabbat? Is he sick?" Later it is discovered that that is exactly what people do think. After being in the kibbutz three months, I liked to see everyone working too.

At any rate, the first week in the kibbutz was really that honeymoon period. After four days of doing nothing but eat, sleep, admire the scenery and absorb the atmosphere, I felt that my moment had come. I must begin to work. Translating this wish into action was not too difficult in a kibbutz. After a few inquiries, in order not to make too obvious the fact that I hadn't started to work yet, I was directed to someone whose name scunded like "Wooley" and I was told that he would see that I got something to do. I tapped him gently on the shoulder, mustered my best Hebrew, and said, "Is there anything for me to do?" He replied as quickly as lightning, "Yes!" Then he asked me what I would like to do, but before I could think of an appropriate job for which I was best suited, he answered his question himself. "Would you like to work in the various branches so that you can get an idea of what you would like to do?" I nodded my head dumbly. How else could I reply? That night my name appeared on the work sheet and lo and behold I was assigned to a job. Unfortunately, I couldn't read the Hebrew, nor did I know what it was until after someone else had read it. The magic words were "sidurei hashka'a" and two names were listed. Oh, I thought, a two-man job. They are putting me on my own already. The kibbutz doesn't waste time in giving people responsibilities.

"Sidurei hashka'a" I discovered, meant preparation for irrigation. Now I was really interested. I immediately began to think of flow of water, velocity upstream and downstream, the water pressure varying with the area, and other important things that I had collected in my education. This must be work that required technical knowledge.

Next morning, dressed in new boots, new work pants, new shirt, I appeared in the dining-room at exactly five minutes to five. They really don't let you over-sleep here. Even the flies get together to disturb one's rest,

should one be sleeping when the sun rises. In the dining-room, I had a cup of tea and bread and jam to prepare myself for the morning's work. As I was gulping down the hot tea, a tall fellow (it has always been my misfortune to work with big men with whom I can never keep up), came over to me and said "Ata David? Bo!" We loaded ourselves with a number of tools, some of which I recognized, others I didn't. Tools over our shoulders, just like you see in the pictures, we went out towards the fields.

The weight of the shovel and turiya (a short handled hoe) on my shoulder suggested that this job might not quite be as I had conceived it. We finally reached a canal about four feet deep and my comrade, Shilim, told me to get into it. Fortunately, there was no water in it. Then followed this conversation:

S.: What language do you speak?

Me: English, Yiddish (I was quite modest about my Ivrit).

S.: Yiddish! Zehr gut. Yetzt kennen mir zich durchreden. (Yiddish! Very good! This I can speak!)

Shilim is from Lithuania. He proceeded to explain what I was required to do--to enlarge the canal at certain points for some pipes. Before long, I was heaving the earth out of the ditch without benefit of the hydraulic formulae. Shilim came over to me sympathetically as I stood in the ditch, soaked with sweat and said "Yes, after ten years, it's still hard!" Shilim has been in Palestine ten years.

Soon my back and sides were all one ache. Now I was atoning for the year of movement work behind a desk in New York. Now I was paying for all those restaurant meals which had given me a four-layer stomach. Now I was repenting the nights I had stayed up and the mornings I had slept late. As my whole past flashed before me in that ditch, I realized how I had deceived so many people, myself included. It was I who had written a series of lectures on education for pioneering in Palestine which probably misled countless group leaders: not once had I mentioned the shovel. Yes, there were articles on Gordon, Brenner and others, but nothing about the very foundation--the shovel. Now I know what our movement really needs--discussion material on the shovel--with practical application at the same time. The series would run something like this:

Discussion 1: Historical background of the Shovel. When first used, its influence on society and social development.

Discussion 2: The various applications of the Shovel in modern Palestine.

Every branch, I find, starts with a Shovel. No matter what the work sheet says--building, irrigation, gardening--take a Shovel along. You'll use it.

Discussion 3: The Shovel in the education of the kibbutz.

Discussion 4: Different personalities from the movement who are today learning the use of the Shovel. There are many.

Discussion 5: The Shovel and the future of Zionism. This discussion may summarize what has been learned and everyone in the group is to go out and

Yaakov did not marry again and lived alone. From Jerusalem he brought a Scroll of the Law, which he carried into his house and with music and festivities, he made it an informal prayer-house. A minyan* of worshippers met there every day for afternoon and evening prayers. On Saturdays and holidays they held morning services as well. Yaakov felt an intense desire to lead in the service at the altar. He knew all the melodies of the weekday and Sabbath prayers, which he sang to himself at home, in the farmyard, and in the field. But his enunciation of the Hebrew words in the prayers made one think of a man walking barefoot over pebbles, and he did not dare.

There were other Jews in Petah-Tikvah who had come from the villages of the Diaspora and were hardly better schooled than himself, and yet every one of them had a chance to lead in public prayer twice a year, on the memorial days for their parents. Yaakov envied them. He, himself, had no knowledge of the date his father and mother had died. Finally he decided to make his own yarzeit and fixed it as the date when he first heard the sad melody of the Jewish prayer in the Ukrainian town. He remembered the day very well. To be sure, it was the date in the Christian calendar that he remembered. But a neighbor of his, a Jerusalemite, who was versed in calendar lore, helped him out. Three times on that day Yaakov stood before the altar. He did it again the following year. The melodies of his prayers were sweet, sad, and touching. His congregants, simple rustic Jews like himself, wept profusely. In time the scholarly Jerusalemites among the settlers, who at first doubted such Hebrew pronunciation could be used in prayer, changed their attitude. They began to enjoy the musical voice of the ignorant old soldier, and even offered him the traditional congratulations of yasher koach on the conclusion of the service. One of the scholars propounded the theory that if the Goyim were Jews and knew how to read Hebrew, they might proudce great cantors.

Every Saturday, at the conclusion of the services in his house, Yaakov would offer his guests the traditional honey cake and brandy, both of his own making. Yaakov was a good cook, a good baker, and knew how to brew strong drinks. He had brought from Russia, along with the samovar for tea, another kind of samovar --a still which brewed what the Jews called the "bitter drop."

Yaakov was fond of strong drink and believed in its healing qualities. He tried to convince the other colonists that brandy was a better cure for malaria fever than the quinine they used.

The Russian soldier was a powerful, tall, broad-shouldered man. On horseback, with his white flowing beard, he was an impressive figure. The Arab shepherds who threw covetous eyes at the Jewish fields, treated Yaakov with healthy respect and called him "Moskub" -- the Muscovite, or the Russian.

Despite his faith in the strong drink, it did not save Yaakov from frequent attacks of malaria, which undermined his strength. But he held out for a long time, as did his stone house, which stood his neighbors in good stead during the floods of the winter of 1879-1880. The whole valley on both banks of the Yarkon River was under water. The settlers' mudhouses were swamped and they could not get out. Their cries for help were in vain, as all the inhabitants of the countryside had fled. Several mudhouses were thrown down. Then Yaakov the Soldier picked some of the strongest men among the Yarkonites and formed a rescue team. Armed with staffs and ropes, they tied themselves to each other, and passing knee deep in water among the houses, they carried out the women, the children and the old people. All the Yarkonites saved from the flood slept on the floor of Yaakov's stone house, ate out of his store, and drank his brandy to keep warm. There, in the depths of despair, they prayed to the L-rd.

*Minimum of ten males required for public worship.

When all the mudhouses crumbled and most of the Yarkonites moved back to Jerusalem, Yaakov's stone house remained for a long time theonly house among the ruins. He was among the last to leave. However, the malaria had eaten to his very bones. A few days after he was taken to Jaffa, he died.

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